



September 15, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20500

Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20016

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Ramiro A. Cavazos  
President & CEO

Dear President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas,

September 15<sup>th</sup> is a celebration of the culture and beautiful heritage of Central Americans and their legacy in our country. We write urging you to honor their contributions by immediately granting a new Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua, also a first designation for Guatemala. In addition, we ask you to use your leadership to call on Congress to legislate to permanently protect all current TPS holders via legislation. As a chamber of commerce, our role is to support the small minority-owned businesses that power our economy and advocate for policies that encourage continued economic growth. Our nation would not prosper without immigrants, Central Americans have contributed locally and nationally making our economy more vibrant.

The USHCC actively promotes the economic growth, development, and interests of more than five million Hispanic-owned businesses that, combined, contribute over \$800 billion to the American economy every year. We also serve as a platform for our nationwide network of over 260 local Hispanic chambers of commerce.

In 2019, TPS holders contributed [\\$2.5 billion](#) in federal tax dollars and hold [\\$8.5 billion](#) in spending power in the U.S. The average TPS recipient has lived in the U.S. for over 20 years. For decades, Central American TPS recipients have not only left a positive footprint on our economy, but have also gifted us their culture, including their food, music, and traditions. In 2020, more than [\\$24 billion](#) in remittances were sent from the United States back to Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala, aid sent by TPS holders and undocumented Central Americans to their families.

Nationwide TPS holders and other immigrants paid [\\$492.4 billion](#) dollars in local and state tax dollars in 2019 and there are [3,242,085 immigrant entrepreneurs](#) boosting the economy further by creating businesses, jobs, and opportunities in the communities they live in. Central American communities have been here for years, many for more than five decades. Some are involved in governance and politics at the local, state, and national level, undertake volunteer work, and support fellow migrants (especially those who are newly arrived) as they integrate into new communities and engage in political processes, such as democratic elections.

In the states of California, Maryland, and New York first and second-generation Central Americans hold local, state, and federal offices, as well as other decision-making positions shaping the quality of life for all migrants. Some of these elected officials include [North Carolina State Representative Ricky Hurtado](#), [San Francisco Supervisor Myrna Melgar](#), [California Assemblywoman Wendy Carrillo](#) and [California Congresswoman Norma Torres](#).



Leaders such as [Eddie Monroy](#), a child of immigrants and former TPS holders from Honduras who serves as Executive Director of the NextGen Chamber of Commerce, America's first business organization supporting our emerging entrepreneurs and business leaders under the age of 40.

Despite all these contributions the Central American region is facing several challenges, climate disasters, and the COVID-19 pandemic have only compounded the deteriorating country conditions that make this region unsafe for return. A [report](#) from the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP) details how climate change-driven displacement will impact migration, including in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. Hurricanes Eta and Iota devastated the northern triangle less than a year ago, and many have still not recovered and are seeking safety. New TPS designations need to be granted because the program was created for this exact situation, to provide relief and protection from deportation to countries that are dangerous and in crisis.

September 15<sup>th</sup> is an opportunity to remind the U.S. Congress that current Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders from these countries have deep roots and invaluable contributions, they, and their families urgently deserve permanent protections now. Furthermore, today is an opportunity to remember that thanks to administrative action designating TPS to Central American nationals hundreds of cities across the United States have been more prosperous and inclusive for over 30 years, your Administration can do the right thing, grant a new TPS designation.

Thank you for your service and partnership in supporting America's Hispanic and minority-owned businesses as well as the more than 63.5 million Latinos/as living in America. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to reach out to C. LeRoy Cavazos-Reyna, Vice President of Government and International Affairs via phone at 956-844-9628 or email at [LCavazos@ushcc.com](mailto:LCavazos@ushcc.com). We look forward to a positive outcome on this important legislative matter.

Respectfully,

Ramiro A. Cavazos  
President & CEO  
U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce