

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 17, 2019

The Honorable Chad Wolf
Acting Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary
Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Acting Secretary Wolf and Secretary Pompeo:

Soon, this administration will decide the fate of nearly 1,200 Yemeni nationals who depend upon Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for their continued livelihood, safety, and survival as TPS for Yemen expires on March 3, 2020. We write to strongly urge you to both extend and re-designate TPS for Yemen through the timely publication of a federal register notice on or before the decision deadline on January 3, 2020.

The war in Yemen has had drastic humanitarian and security consequences, and TPS is both deserved and warranted under law for these reasons. The outbreak of war, which was the main reason for TPS designation in September 2015,¹ remains ongoing, with widespread violence throughout the country. The United Nations and the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project recently reported that over 100,000 people died in the civil war, including over 20,000 killed in 2019 alone.² All parties involved in the war are indiscriminately targeting civilians and vital civilian infrastructure, including residences, medical centers, and transportation networks.³

Moreover, the war's widespread destruction has caused the world's worst humanitarian crisis, an extraordinary and temporary condition that justified the extension and re-designation of TPS in 2018.⁴ Over 24 million Yemenis—roughly two-thirds of the population—need some form of humanitarian assistance. At least 8.4 million are severely food insecure, and nearly every governorate in the country is at crisis levels for impending famine.⁵ The civil war has caused 3.6 million Yemenis to be internally displaced, the majority of which have now been displaced for

¹Designation of the Republic of Yemen for Temporary Protected Status; USCIS Notice, 80 Fed. Reg. 53319 (September 3, 2015).

²Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, <https://www.acleddata.com/>

³“Yemen--World Report 2019,” Human Rights Watch, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/yemen>. Human Rights Watch documented 90 unlawful coalition airstrikes, killing nearly 1,000 civilians, and targeting homes, markets, hospitals, schools, and mosques. *Id.* Cluster munitions and air bombardment strikes have also been deployed in the country. *Id.*

⁴Extension and Redesignation of the Republic of Yemen for Temporary Protected Status; USCIS Notice, 83 FR 40307 (August 14, 2018).

⁵United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). (2019). Yemen: Emergency Dashboard (October 2019). Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WFP-0000110159.pdf>.

over one year.⁶ Preventable diseases are rampant, with the international community recording almost 850,000 suspected cases of cholera, as well as the spread of diphtheria and measles across the country.⁷

The case for extending TPS for the 18-month maximum allowed by the law, and re-designating TPS for eligible Yemenis, is statutorily clear. The armed conflict renders the safe return of roughly 1,200 Yemeni TPS holders in the United States unfeasible and inhumane. The humanitarian crisis represents a “substantial, but temporary, disruption of living conditions” for Yemenis, and the civil war and loss of territory and vital infrastructure continues to render the Yemeni government “unable, temporarily, to handle adequately the return” of Yemenis (8 U.S.C. §1254a).

Extending and re-designating TPS for Yemen is also clearly in the interest of America’s national security. Since March 2015, the United States has been involved in a regional military campaign in support of the internationally recognized government and seeks, for the stability of Yemen and its neighbors, a negotiated settlement to the conflict and an amelioration of its resulting humanitarian crisis. The sudden return of 1,200 Yemenis will not only further undermine the international humanitarian response in Yemen, but also undermine America’s standing amongst our allies while empowering antagonistic states and non-state actors in the region contrary to our longstanding security interests.

Current TPS recipients from Yemen living in safely in the United States have contributed greatly to the social and economic welfare of our communities. Failing to extend TPS for Yemenis who have it and re-designate it for eligible individuals will put many men, women, children, and families in jeopardy and while undermining the security of the American homeland.

Sincerely,



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Raul M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



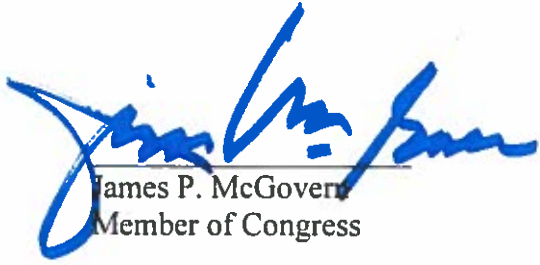
Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

⁶ *Id.*

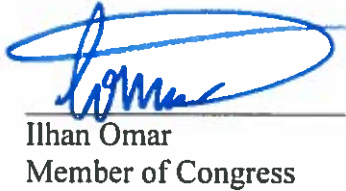
⁷ World Health Organization, Outbreak Update – Cholera in Yemen, 7 July 2019, <http://www.emro.who.int/pandemic-epidemic-diseases/cholera/outbreak-update-cholera-in-yemen-7-july-2019.html>



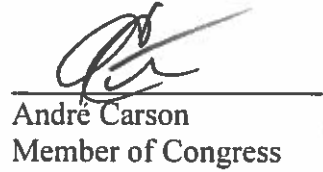
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



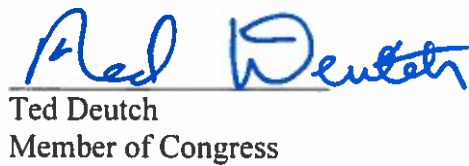
Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



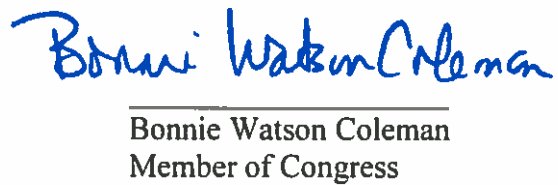
Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



André Carson
Member of Congress



Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



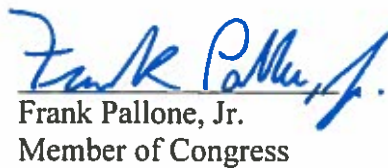
Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



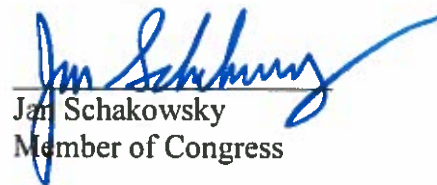
David E. Price
Member of Congress



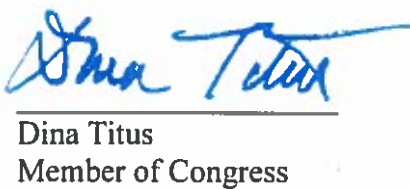
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



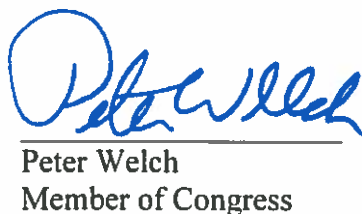
Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



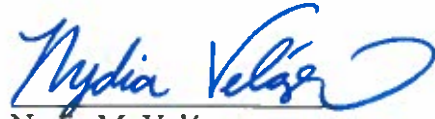
Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress