

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 26, 2018

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As the violence and unrest in Nicaragua continue to worsen, we write to respectfully request that you reconsider your decision to terminate the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for Nicaragua, which is set to expire on January 5, 2019.

Codified by Congress as part of the Immigration and Nationality Act, TPS has served to provide a safe haven to foreign nationals who are unable to safely return to their home country due to ongoing violence, environmental disasters, and other extraordinary conditions. Nicaragua was granted TPS status in 1999 after the devastating damages from Hurricane Mitch, which has allowed approximately 5,000 Nicaraguans to live, work, and positively contribute to our great nation. Although your Administration has decided that Nicaragua no longer qualifies for TPS based upon the conditions that granted the country's original 1999 designation, we ask that you consider the temporary conditions, including armed conflict, facing Nicaragua today to swiftly extend TPS to Nicaraguans.

Since 2006, Daniel Ortega has taken systematic steps to weaken democratic institutions in Nicaragua, such as eliminating term limits, removing all opposition, and rigging local and national elections. As you are aware, on April 18, 2018, the Nicaraguan people began to peacefully protest the Ortega administration, calling for its democratic rights to be reestablished. In turn, Daniel Ortega has unleashed its National Police and has armed pro-government mobs killing close to 400 people, and injuring over 2000 people, in addition to the many Nicaraguans who continue to be imprisoned and disappeared. In light of this unabated violence, we believe Nicaraguans residing legally in the U.S. should not be sent back to those unstable conditions.

Over the past three months, your Administration has continuously spoken out against Daniel Ortega's many abuses:

- On April 20, 2018, Ambassador Michael Kozak, the Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor of the U.S. Department of State, said, "Nicaragua is going in the wrong direction on many fronts and that is one of them, of media freedom. But also on all the basics, I mean, it's a long litany of torture, extrajudicial killing, the elections were a sham . . . the Ortega government has basically shut down a lot of the opposition, a lot of the independent civil society organizations as well as the free media";
- On April 22, 2018, the U.S. Department of State issued a statement saying "we condemn the violence and the excessive force used by police and others against civilians who are exercising their constitutional right to freedom of expression and assembly";
- On June 7, 2018 the U.S. Department of State announced visa restrictions against individuals involved in human rights abuses or undermining democracy in Nicaragua;

- On June 20, 2018, the U.S. Department of State announced, “The United States condemns the ongoing government-sponsored violence and intimidation campaign in Nicaragua, including the June 16 arson attack against the home and business of a family in Managua, killing six, and the further intimidation of the family during the wake”;
- On June 25, 2018 the U.S. Embassy in Nicaragua demanded from the Nicaraguan National Police the return of vehicles donated by the U.S. government for legitimate duties, but that “have been used by the national police of Nicaragua, and irregular forces under their command, to violently suppress the voices of those who protest peacefully against their government's actions”;
- On July 5, 2018, the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned, under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, Nicaraguan National Police Commissioner Francisco Javier Diaz Madriz and Secretary of the Mayor’s Office of Managua Fidel Antonio Moreno Briones for being responsible for, or the leaders of entities involved in, serious human rights abuse in Nicaragua. OFAC also sanctioned Jose Francisco Lopez Centeno, Vice President of ALBANISA and President of Petronic, for engaging in corrupt activities.

Therefore we ask that you consider the precarious situation in Nicaragua and, in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations, you reconsider your decision to terminate the TPS designation for Nicaragua. The U.S. has the responsibility to protect the fundamental freedoms of all individuals, safety being one of them, and we believe it would be irresponsible for the U.S. to send these individuals to Nicaragua to face violence, chaos and oppression.

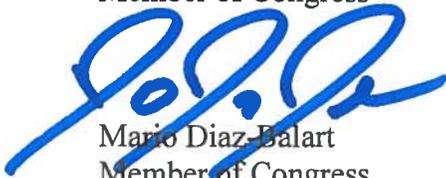
Sincerely,



Ileana Ros-Lehtinen  
Member of Congress



Albio Sires  
Member of Congress



Mario Diaz-Balart  
Member of Congress



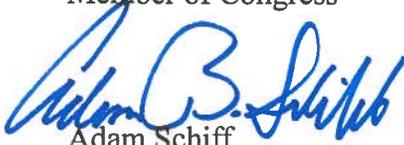
Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



Carlos Curbelo  
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres  
Member of Congress



Adam Schiff  
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Kirstjen Nielsen  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

The Honorable Michael Pompeo  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of State