

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR MICHELLE WU



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION URGING THE EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS FOR HAITIAN NATIONALS

- WHEREAS:** On January 15, 2010, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Haitian nationals who were in the United States as of January 12, 2010, the date of the devastating earthquake in Haiti; and
- WHEREAS:** The TPS designation allows eligible Haitian nationals to temporarily continue living and working in the United States, and TPS was made available to Haitian nationals for 18 months from January 12, 2010 to July 22, 2011; and
- WHEREAS:** On July 23, 2011, Haiti's TPS designation was extended and redesignated for 18 months, and the latest extension of TPS occurred on January 23, 2016 and expires on July 22, 2017; and
- WHEREAS:** The Greater Boston region benefits from a strong and thriving Haitian American community, more than 40,000 strong, making up the country's third-largest Haitian population; and nearly 1 out of 10 Haitians living in this area have TPS; and
- WHEREAS:** Haiti has not yet recovered from the 2010 earthquake; the nation suffers from economic and political crises, rampant Zika and Chikungunya, the effects of a devastating cholera epidemic which has killed 10,000 and sickened 900,000, and most recently, the destructive effects of Hurricane Matthew, which cost Haiti \$2.7 billion or 32% of its GDP per a March, 2017 United Nations report; and
- WHEREAS:** On October 4, 2016, Hurricane Matthew was the first Category 4 hurricane to hit Haiti in 52 years, affecting 2 million Haitians, with 1,000 casualties and leaving at least 1.4 million in need of emergency aid; and nearly six months later the United Nations estimates that hundreds of thousands of Haitians remain "extremely food insecure," some have died as a result of malnutrition, and thousands may starve to death in what experts describe as a looming humanitarian disaster; and
- WHEREAS:** The 50,000 Haitians with TPS have been in the US for at least six and a half years, the vast majority since well before the January 2010 earthquake, and have strong community ties including families with U.S.-born, American-citizen children; and
- WHEREAS:** The \$1.3B per year in remittances sent to Haiti from Haitians in the U.S. are crucial to sustain hundreds of thousands of loved ones back home in Haiti; and

WHEREAS: The United Nations has raised barely \$2 million of its \$400 million minimum goal to fight cholera in Haiti; and

WHEREAS: Haiti's government is in no position to ensure safety to or assimilate the 50,000 Haitians with TPS, nor to make up for their remittances should they be curtailed by their deportation, and it remains unsafe to deport them; and

WHEREAS: There continue to be extraordinary and temporary conditions that prevent Haitian nationals from safely returning to Haiti, and therefore TPS should be extended for an additional 18 months; *NOW,*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Boston City Council urges President Donald Trump and the United States Department of Homeland Security to extend temporary protected status for Haitian nationals.

Filed on: May 17, 2017