



### **American Promise Act of 2017 Bill Summary**

Rep. Nydia Velazquez (D-New York) introduced the American Promise Act of 2017, [H.R. 4253](#), on November 3, 2017. The bill would allow [temporary protected status](#) (TPS) holders or those with [deferred enforced departure](#) (DED) to apply for lawful permanent resident (LPR) status to obtain a green card, if they do so within three years of enactment of the bill. TPS is granted by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to certain foreign-born individuals who cannot safely return to their home countries because of ongoing armed conflict, environmental disasters, or other extraordinary circumstances. Currently, over 300,000 foreign nationals living in the United States possess TPS status. DED is authorized by the president and currently covers over 2,000 nationals from Liberia. For more information about specific countries designated for TPS, see our fact sheet [here](#).

#### **What would the American Promise Act do?**

- The American Promise Act would allow nationals of El Salvador, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Liberia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen to apply for LPR status if they:
  - Apply within three years of enactment of the bill;
  - Meet LPR admissibility requirements;
  - Have TPS or DED on or before 10/1/2017; and
  - Have been physically in the U.S. for at least three years since the effective date of the bill.
- Certain provisions in the Immigration and Nationality Act dealing with the inadmissibility of the application would be made inapplicable.
- The bill makes available waivers of other grounds for inadmissibility where humanitarian, family unit, and public interest concerns are involved.
- Extreme hardship exceptions may be available for those who cannot meet the physical presence requirement.
- A person with a prior deportation or voluntary departure order may still apply, but if the LPR status application is denied then the previous order becomes enforceable again.
- Employment authorization must be issued when applications for LPR status is filed.
- Spouses, parent and unmarried children of the applicant for LPR status can also apply but must file their application within 3 years of enactment of this bill and are eligible for LPR status if they meet requirements similar to the applicant.

- Approval of LPR status for TPS holders will not reduce the number LPR slots provided for in the Immigration and Naturalization Act.
- Those who are from counties that are no longer designated as TPS or DED are not eligible to apply for LPR status unless such designation expires on or after 1/1/2017.
- The bill also creates certain reporting requirements when a country's TPS designation is terminated.

### **How many TPS and DED holders would be eligible to apply for LPR status under the American Promise Act?**

- As of August 2017, TPS re-registrations and DED beneficiaries numbered [approximately 325,000](#). This represents the highest possible number of individuals who could be eligible under the American Promise Act.

### **TPS Holders Are Valuable Contributors to the United States:**

- **TPS holders participate in our economy.** TPS holders from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti [contribute](#) a combined \$4.5 billion in pre-tax wages or salary income annually to U.S. gross domestic product and \$6.9 billion to Social Security and Medicare over a decade.
- **TPS holders have high rates of labor force participation.** 88.5 percent of TPS holders from El Salvador and Honduras are [working](#). Male TPS holders work in the following sectors or occupations: construction and painting (23 percent), driving/deliveries (13.7 percent), cleaning buildings or houses (7.3 percent), gardening (5.4 percent), cooking (3.9 percent), or store clerk (2.5) percent. Female TPS holders work in these sectors or occupations: cleaning buildings or houses (27.9 percent), childcare (6.6 percent), cooking (5.2 percent), clothing manufacturing (4 percent) or store clerk (3.8 percent).
- **TPS holders have established lives throughout the U.S.** 30 percent of [households](#) with a Haitian, Honduran, or Salvadoran TPS holder have mortgage. The six states with the largest populations of TPS holders from these three countries are California (55,000), Texas (45,000), Florida (45,000), New York (26,000), Virginia (24,000), and Maryland (23,000).
- **TPS holders come from a diverse set of places.** In addition to the nearly 300,000 TPS holders from El Salvador, Haiti, and Honduras, current TPS holders also [come from](#) Nepal (8,950), Nicaragua (2,550), Somalia (250), South Sudan (70), Sudan (1,040), Syria (5,800), and Yemen (1,000).