



ESPERER Act of 2017 Bill Summary

Representative Carlos Curbelo (R-Florida) introduced the Extending Status Protection for Eligible Refugees with Established Residency (ESPERER) Act of 2017, [H.R. 4148](#), on October 31, 2017. Original [cosponsors](#) of the bipartisan bill include Representatives Alcee Hastings (D-Florida), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Florida), and Frederica Wilson (D-Florida). The ESPERER Act would allow for nationals of Haiti, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Honduras that are [temporary protected status](#) (TPS) recipients to apply for lawful permanent resident (LPR) status to obtain a green card. 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. For more information about specific countries designated for TPS, see our fact sheet [here](#).

What would the ESPERER Act do?

- The ESPERER Act would allow certain nationals of Haiti, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Honduras to apply for LPR status if the applicant:
 - Was a TPS holder on 1/13/2011;
 - Is in TPS status when they apply for LPR status;
 - Was physically present in the United States on 1/12/2011, physically present in the United States for at least one year, and physically present when applying for LPR status; and
 - Files their LPR status application before 1/1/2021.
- Applicants may be found ineligible for the program for various reasons, including on health and criminal activity grounds.
- A person with a prior deportation or voluntary departure order may still apply, but if the application for LPR status is denied, the previous order becomes enforceable again.
- Allows for an employment authorization document to be issued when the application for LPR status is filed.
- Spouses and unmarried sons and daughters of applicants for LPR status can apply as well and are eligible if requirements similar to the applicant are met.
- Approval of LPR status for TPS holders will not reduce the number of LPR slots provided for in the Immigration and Naturalization Act.

How many TPS holders would be eligible to apply for LPR status under the ESPERER Act?

- As of October 2017, [approximately 300,550](#) Haitian, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, and Honduran TPS holders had re-registered for TPS. This represents the highest possible number of individuals who could be eligible under the ESPERER 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).