



## **Bill Summary: Venezuela Temporary Protected Status Act of 2019**

Senators Robert Menendez (D-New Jersey), Marco Rubio (R-Florida), Richard Durbin (D-Illinois), Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont) and Cory Booker (D-NJ) introduced the Venezuela Temporary Protected Status Act of 2019, or [S. 636](#), on February 28, 2019. The bill would designate Venezuela for [temporary protected status](#) (TPS), allowing certain Venezuelan nationals to stay in the U.S., regardless of their current immigration status. The Secretary of Homeland Security grants TPS to certain individuals who cannot safely return to their home countries due to ongoing armed conflict, environmental disasters, or other extraordinary circumstances. The bill is almost identical to [H.R. 549](#) introduced in the House by Representatives Darren Soto (D-Florida) and Mario Diaz-Balart (R-Florida), on January 15, 2019.

While the total number of individuals, who would be eligible for TPS under S. 636, is [unclear](#), about [72,000](#) Venezuelans have come to the U.S. since 2014.

### **The Venezuela TPS Act of 2019 would:**

- [Designate](#) Venezuela for TPS, allowing its nationals to remain in the U.S. for 18 months, regardless of their immigration status if they:
  - Have been continuously physically present in the United States since the date of the enactment of the bill; and
  - Meet all other requirements for TPS.
- [Provide](#) Venezuelan nationals who meet the above requirements with:
  - Employment authorization; and
  - Authorization to travel outside the U.S. for emergencies and extenuating circumstances.
- [Direct](#) the Secretaries of State and Homeland Security to work with international partners to increase capacity of countries surrounding Venezuela to provide migration services and asylum, specifically to establish and expand in-country reception centers and shelters and improve migration and asylum registration systems.

### **Congress should designate Venezuela for TPS because:**

- The country has been [facing](#) unprecedented economic, humanitarian, security, and refugee crisis, consisting of extreme food and medicine shortages, severe infant and child malnutrition, rampant crime, and government-sponsored repression.
- Venezuela [ranks](#) as the most dangerous country in the world.
  - In 2017, the country's homicide rate [stood](#) at 89 per 100,000 people which compares to [5.3](#) per 100,000 people in the United States.
- TPS holders [contribute](#) to the U.S. economy. For example, TPS holders from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti [contribute](#) \$4.5 billion in income to the gross domestic product annually and \$6.9 billion to Social Security and Medicare over a decade.