



## **Bill Summary: Safe Environment from Countries Under Repression and Emergency (SECURE) Act**

The Safe Environment from Countries Under Repression and Emergency (SECURE) Act, [S. 879](#), would allow [temporary protected status](#) (TPS) and [deferred enforced departure](#) (DED) holders to apply for lawful permanent resident (LPR) status to obtain a green card if they meet certain criteria. Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-Maryland) introduced the bill on March 26, 2019, and Senators Ben Cardin (D-Maryland), Dianne Feinstein (D-California), and Tim Kaine (D-Virginia) are lead co-sponsors of the bill.

TPS and DED are forms of relief from removal granted by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security or the President to certain foreign-born individuals in the U.S. 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 and up to 3,600 hold DED status.

- The SECURE Act would allow TPS holders and individuals with DED to adjust to LPR (green-card holder) status if they meet the following requirements:
  - Establish they have lived continuously in the U.S. for at least three years from the day of application for the adjustment;
  - Demonstrate they were eligible for or had TPS or DED on the date of their countries' last designation or extension of TPS or DED status; and
  - Pass applicable criminal and national security screenings.
- The bill would also allow former TPS and DED holders, who were removed or ordered for voluntary departure from the U.S. on or after September 28, 2016, to apply for LPR status from abroad if they meet the following additional requirements:
  - Establish at least three years of continuous presence in the U.S. prior to their date of removal or departure; and
  - Pay a fee that may not exceed \$1,140.
- The bill would protect TPS holders and TPS-eligible individuals from El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen, as well as eligible individuals from Guinea and Sierra Leone who were previously designated for TPS and DED holders from Liberia.
- The bill would cancel any deportation proceedings for TPS holders and individuals with DED upon approval of their LPR application.
- The bill would allow spouses and children of TPS holders, who are eligible for adjustment of status to LPR, also to apply for a green card if they meet certain criteria.
- The bill would require the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to provide a report on future decisions to terminate TPS designations, including an explanation of any progress made by a country to resolve the issues that led to the TPS designation and the methods used by DHS to determine whether the country's conditions have improved. The report would be due within three days after Secretary's announcement of the termination.