

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 22, 2016

Dear President Barack Obama:

We write to once again convey to you the urgency facing our many constituents who are from Ecuador or who have loved ones living in Ecuador. In the approximately five months since an earthquake devastated the nation, we have received letters, taken phone calls, and had meetings with Ecuadorians who immediately came together to call for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). We reiterate our support for TPS for Ecuador.

As you know, TPS was created precisely for situations of natural or environmental disasters, ongoing armed conflict, or other extraordinary and temporary conditions.¹ The earthquake that struck Ecuador on April 16, 2016 had a magnitude of 7.8 with numerous aftershocks in the days and weeks that followed. The death toll has risen to at least 670 with countless others who were injured, and tens of thousands have been left homeless. The pervasive damage is estimated to cost around \$3.3 billion. With such significant devastation and the need to focus on rebuilding, Ecuador is not in a position to adequately receive its nationals. TPS would provide Ecuadorians living in the U.S. with a stable and safe home, the ability to work here and the opportunity to send remittances to Ecuador, all of which would go a long way towards facilitating the recovery effort.

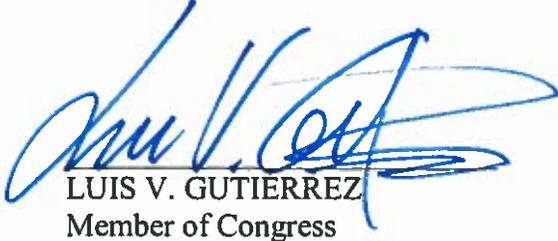
As steadfast advocates for TPS for Ecuador, we have communicated regularly with both the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of State which must collaborate in this process. Certain key steps must take place before DHS can designate TPS for a foreign country. Ecuador has already made the official request for TPS on May 18, 2016, and the Department of State has made and transmitted its evaluation of TPS for Ecuador to DHS in July. We now wait for DHS to make the final decision on this matter—it is the last step in this process.

The nearly five months that have passed is already too long for the Ecuadorians facing heartbreak and uncertainty in the aftermath of a national tragedy. We urge you to act swiftly and compassionately in responding to the needs of our Ecuadorian constituents and grant TPS for Ecuador.

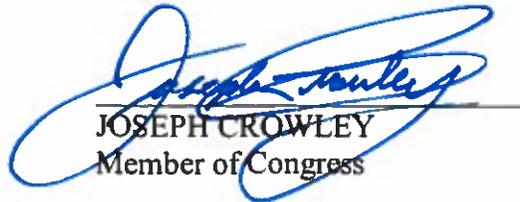
¹ See INA § 244(b), 8 U.S.C § 1254(b).

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



LUIS V. GUTIERREZ
Member of Congress



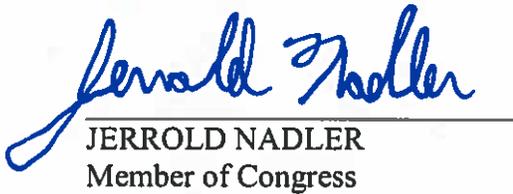
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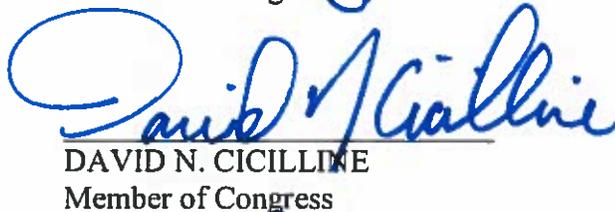
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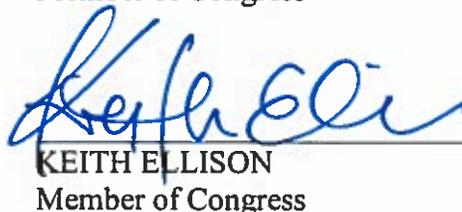
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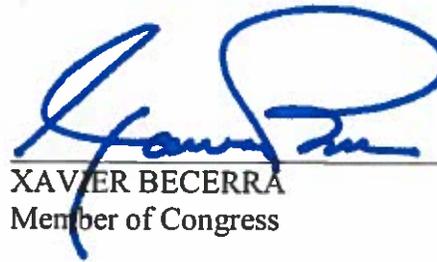

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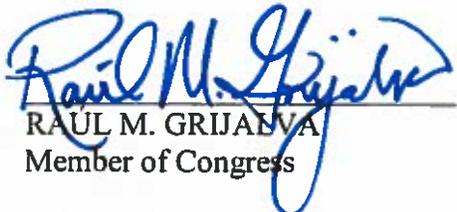

DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ
Member of Congress

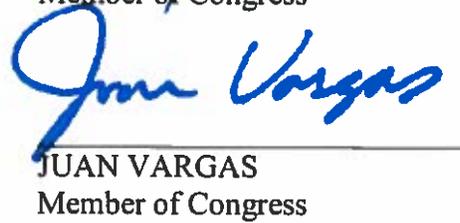

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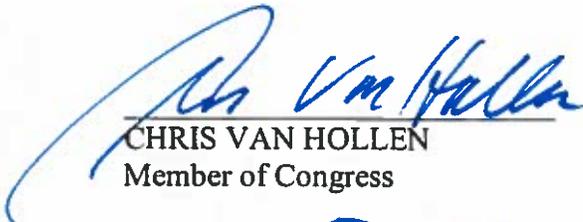

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Member of Congress

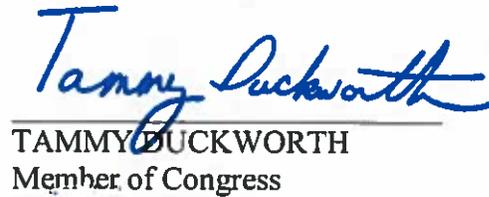

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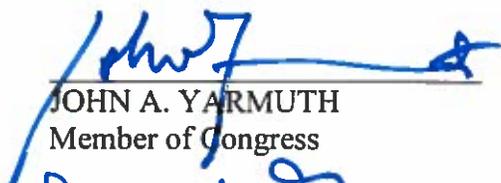

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NORMA J. TORRES
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Jeh Johnson, Secretary of Homeland Security
The Honorable John Kerry, Secretary of State