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GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN  
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
AND THE WORKFORCE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EMPLOYMENT,  
LABOR AND PENSIONS  
RANKING MEMBER  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INDIAN, INSULAR  
AND ALASKA NATIVE AFFAIRS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER, POWER AND OCEANS  
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ASSISTANCE  
AND MEMORIAL AFFAIRS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

October 19, 2018

The Honorable L. Francis Cissna  
Director, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
Office of the Director  
Room 5110 MS 2000  
Washington, DC 20529-2000

Dear Director Cissna,

I write to ask you to extend for another two years the current humanitarian parole policy allowing immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and certain "stateless" individuals to maintain legal status in the Northern Mariana Islands. Without your approval, the policy will expire at the end of this year, leaving these individuals and the families of which they are part at risk for separation.

The policy, first put in place at my request in 2011, allowed the immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and certain stateless persons, who had been lawfully residing in the Marianas under Commonwealth immigration law, to maintain lawful presence, when federal immigration law took effect in that year. The policy was subsequently renewed in 2012, 2014, and 2016 with eligibility limited to those initially approved in 2011. According to data provided by your agency, there were 953 individuals still resident in the Marianas under this policy as of July 23; and 252 petitions were pending.

I understand that parole is a temporary remedy to the problem of family separation during the immigration transition period in the Marianas; and the last seven years have provided an opportunity for some parolees to petition for status, as their U.S. citizen children came of age or as the parolees otherwise became eligible. I have been working since taking office in 2009 to provide legislatively an opportunity for these parolees to adjust status. Although these efforts have not been successful, I am encouraged to believe by the recent enactment of Public Law 115-53, the Northern Mariana Islands Economic Expansion Act, and Public Law 115-218, the Northern Mariana Islands U.S. Workforce Act of 2018, that a legislative remedy is within reach. So, I seek your assistance to ensure that the families intended to benefit from my efforts may continue to maintain their lawful presence.

I am, also, encouraged to think you will look favorably on a two-year extension because – for the first time, I believe – both the Governor and the Legislature of the Northern Mariana Islands have registered support for this policy, emphasizing both the humanitarian and the economic rationales for continuation.

Washington, DC Office  
2411 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: (202) 225-2646

Saipan Office  
P.O. Box 504879  
Saipan, MP 96950  
(670) 323-2647/8

Rota Office  
P.O. Box 1361  
Rota, MP 96951  
(670) 532-2647

Tinian Office  
P.O. Box 520394  
Tinian, MP 96952  
(670) 433-2647

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October 19, 2018  
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Thank you for your attention to this request. Should you or your staff have any questions, please call 202-225-2646 or contact Bob Schwalbach, Chief of Staff, at [bob.schwalbach@mail.house.gov](mailto:bob.schwalbach@mail.house.gov) or Frances Diaz, Senior Legislative Assistant, at [frances.diaz@mail.house.gov](mailto:frances.diaz@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely



GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN  
Member of Congress

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
Office of the Director (MS 2000)  
Washington, DC 20529-2000



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

December 27, 2018

The Honorable Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Sablan:

Thank you for your October 19, 2018 letter recommending continuation of the parole program for certain immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and stateless persons in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

On January 25, 2017, President Trump issued Executive Order (E.O.) 13767, *Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements*. Section 11(d) of the E.O. requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to “take appropriate action to ensure that parole authority under section 212(d)(5) of the INA (8 U.S.C. 1182(d)(5)) is exercised only on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the plain language of the statute, and in all circumstances only when an individual demonstrates urgent humanitarian reasons or a significant public benefit derived from such parole.”

Pursuant to this E.O., I have conducted a review of USCIS categorical parole programs. As part of that review, I considered the CNMI categorical parole programs, and determined that these programs represent a broader implementation of the parole statute than is appropriate. Therefore, I am terminating USCIS CNMI categorical parole programs, including the program for immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and certain stateless persons present in the CNMI. My decision also includes the categorical parole programs for CNMI permanent residents, immediate relatives of CNMI permanent residents, immediate relatives of citizens of the Freely Associated States (Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Palau), and certain in-home foreign worker caregivers of CNMI residents.

USCIS is issuing individual notices to those requesting parole extensions, and communications materials to ensure these parolees are aware that the program is ending. Although individuals will not be authorized extensions of parole under this parole program itself, to ensure an orderly wind down and to provide an opportunity for those employed to work with their employer to seek another immigrant or nonimmigrant status, USCIS will authorize a transitional parole period and extension of employment authorization (if applicable) for 180 days. This transitional parole period will give individuals time to prepare to leave without accruing unlawful presence or to seek another status. USCIS will inform parolees that, at the conclusion of the transitional parole period, they must depart the CNMI and, if they have not sought and been approved for some other lawful status to remain, removal proceedings may be



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instituted. My decision does not preclude individuals paroled under this program from seeking parole on a case-by-case basis if the applicant demonstrates an urgent humanitarian or a significant public benefit reason for parole and that the applicant merits a favorable exercise of discretion.

It is appropriate that Congress address the permanent status of individuals previously covered by these parole programs, and we are ready to provide technical assistance with respect to any legislation on this subject.

Thank you for your letter and interest in this important issue. Should you require any additional assistance, please have your staff contact the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs at (202) 272-1940.

Respectfully,



L. Francis Cissna  
Director