

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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July 16, 2018

The Honorable Kirstjen Nielsen
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary
Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Nielsen and Secretary Pompeo:

We write to ask that you extend Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Somalia before the deadline of July 19. Unless the Administration takes action, the protections now in effect for many Somalis living in the United States will expire on September 17, 2018.

Somalis have had protected status in the United States since President George H.W. Bush first approved TPS for Somalia in response to its civil war in 1991. That status has been extended 22 times under presidents from both parties.

Conditions in Somalia remain dire, and armed conflict continues to be a threat to the Somali people. Somalia experienced its worst terrorist attack in history last year, with a truck bomb in the capital of Mogadishu killing over 500 people. Between January 2016 and October 2017, the United Nations reported 4,585 civilian casualties resulting from armed conflict in Somalia. In addition to these security risks, droughts have compromised millions of Somalis' access to food, and poverty and famine remain widespread.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Rob Portman
United States Senator



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

August 6, 2018

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar:

Thank you for your July 16, 2018 letter. Secretary Nielsen asked that I respond on her behalf.

I appreciate your interest in the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for Somalia. The Secretary of Homeland Security's authority to designate a country for TPS and to extend or terminate a country's existing designation is based upon specific statutory criteria. *See* Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) § 244(b). U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is principally responsible for advising the Secretary on TPS issues and implementing the program.

At least 60 days before the current expiration date for a TPS designation, the Secretary must review conditions in the foreign country and, after consultation with other appropriate federal agencies, determine whether the statutory conditions for TPS continue to be met. Under the INA, if the Secretary determines that the conditions for designation continue to be met with respect to a country, the designation must be extended. However, if the Secretary determines that the conditions are no longer met with respect to a country, the Secretary is required to terminate the designation. *See* INA § 244(b)(1),(3).

On July 19, 2018, after carefully considering relevant conditions in Somalia and the statutory TPS requirements, Secretary Nielsen announced her determination to extend the TPS designation for Somalia for 18 months, through March 17, 2020. Prior to the conclusion of this 18-month extension, the Secretary will review conditions in Somalia and, after consultation with other appropriate federal agencies, determine whether another extension or a termination is warranted, in full compliance with the INA.

Additional information on the extension of TPS for Somalia can be found in Secretary Nielsen's July 19, 2018 announcement of the decision posted on the Department of Homeland Security's website, on the USCIS website, and in a notice that will be published in the *Federal Register*.

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
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Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. Senator Rob Portman, who co-signed your letter, will receive a separate, identical response. Should you require any additional assistance, please have your staff contact the USCIS Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs at (202) 272-1940.

Respectfully,



L. Francis Cissna
Director