Dear Acting Secretary Wolf:

On behalf of the 129 undersigned faith-based organizations and faith leaders from across traditions, we call on you to extend Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Yemen for 18 months and redesignate to protect as many lives as possible from Yemen’s brutal conflict and humanitarian crisis. Our call is rooted in our country’s interfaith values. The Quran teaches: “They love those who emigrated to them and find not any desire in their hearts of what the emigrants were given, but rather give them preference over themselves, even though they are in privation. Whoever is protected from the greediness of his own soul, then those will be successful.”¹ Similarly, the Torah commands, “You shall have one standard for stranger and citizen alike: for I the LORD am your God.”²

A failure to extend TPS for Yemen for 18 months and redesignate would go against basic principles of human dignity, justice, and mercy. Nearly 1,500 Yemeni nationals currently hold TPS.³ Yemen was first designated for TPS in 2015 in response to the escalating violence in the country, which erupted in the summer of 2014 when the Houthis began their takeover of Yemen, sparking a civil war.⁴ The war has created one of the most appalling humanitarian crises in the world, which prompted the 2018 18-month extension of TPS.⁵ Today, Yemen is in its fifth year of brutal war and conditions for Yemeni civilians continue to deteriorate. As of September 2019, Yemen remains “the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.”⁶ Over three-quarters of the population, some 24.1 million Yemenis, urgently need humanitarian assistance.⁷ More than 3.6 million people are displaced in Yemen.⁸ Since the beginning of the conflict, at least 6,827 civilians have been killed and more than 10,000 wounded.⁹ Every month, bombs and disease kill or injure approximately 37 children.¹⁰

“I am trying my best to support my family in Yemen and at the same time I am thinking about the rest of the people in Yemen who have no support. I am trying to get my family out. Look at what is happening there. There is nothing to eat. It is not

¹ Surat Al-Hashr 59:9.
² Leviticus 24:22.
In addition to the devastating impact of the civil war, there is mass hunger across the country: 24.1 million—80 percent of individuals—are at risk of disease and hunger, with 14.2 million in need of “acute” assistance. Approximately 20 million people are food insecure, with a quarter of a million on the verge of starvation. Experts warn that Yemen is “one step” away from famine. Currently, 17.8 million people lack safe water and sanitation, and 19.7 million lack adequate health care. Upwards of 78 percent of Yemenis are in poverty, with women being more severely affected.

Diseases such as diphtheria and measles have also spread across multiple governorates, and these outbreaks are likely to worsen as the war continues. The Yemeni people continue to face one of the worst cholera epidemics ever recorded, with more than one million documented cases so far. From the beginning of 2019 through July 2019, Yemen reported 845,017 cholera cases with 1,234 deaths. Bombing and conflict affect at least half of Yemen’s hospitals and health care facilities. There is also intentional targeting of public water systems in military action, meaning there is little hope of stopping the outbreak. Overall, the humanitarian crisis has harmed children most severely; according to Save the Children, more than 130 Yemen children die each day from hunger and disease.

In addition to health care, water, and sanitation systems, other vital infrastructure has been ruined. In the 2017 extension and redesignation of TPS for Yemen, the U.S. government cited that half of children in Yemen are unable to attend school because of the destruction or military takeover of buildings. The country is riddled with landmines, which prevent access to vital infrastructure, and water and food sources.

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14 Id.
20 Id.
In light of the ongoing armed conflict and extraordinary conditions, we pray that you heed our call to redesignate TPS for Yemen to protect more recently arrived Yemenis and extend the designation for at least another 18 months. TPS holders are an integral part of the fabric of our community; they are our neighbors, peacefully living their lives, caring for their families, and contributing to the U.S. economy. Failure to extend and redesignate TPS for Yemen would risk the lives of thousands of our neighbors as Yemen remains consumed by war. We implore you to think about the moral imperative to love our neighbor and welcome the sojourner, particularly those fleeing violence.

Sincerely,

Faith Organizations (53)
ADL (Anti-Defamation League)
African American Ministers In Action
American Friends Service Committee
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore
Buddhist Action Coalition
Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Boston
Catholic Charities of Central & Northern Missouri/Refugee & Immigration Services
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.
Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice
Church World Service
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
Council on American-Islamic Relations
Council on American-Islamic Relations, New York (CAIR-NY)
Crossing Borders Dubuque
Daughters of Charity
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries
East Bay Sanctuary Covenant
Faith in Public Life
First Congregational Church of Houston
Franciscan Action Network
Friends Committee on National Legislation (Quakers)
Georgia Interfaith Public Policy Center
HIAS
Immigration and Refugee Committee St Therese
Jesuit Social Research Institute
Justice for Muslims Collective
Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Commission, Priests of the Sacred Heart, US Province
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Muslim Public Affairs Council
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Council for Jewish Women
National Council of Churches
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New Sanctuary Movement of Philadelphia
Our Lady Queen of Peace
Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Western Province Leadership
Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana
Sisters of St. Francis
Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York
Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet Albany Province
Sojourners
St. Francis Community Services
The Interfaith LGBTI Clergy Association
Together Colorado
Tri-State Franciscan Solidarity Table
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
United University Church
Western NC Sanctuary Movement

**Faith Leaders (76)**

Br. Michael Potvin-Frost
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. Board Sister Sally Duffy, SC
Coordinator, Peace and Social Justice Committee Karen Jackson
Dr. Donald N. Nichols
Dr. Grace Dyrness
Dr. Timothy Helton
Dr. Sr. Margaret Shaw
Earth and Social Justice Pastor Doug Nelson
Elder Glenda Pawsey
Father Rick LaBrecque
Fr. Jim Hoffman OFM
Fr. Joseph Monahan
Franciscan Sisters of the Poor, US Area Karen Hartman, SFP
Jim Myres, OFS
Lay Leader JL Angell
Minister to Migrants Larry Trent
Parishioner Levita Rupp
Pastor Carolyn Dipboye
Pastor Richard Fry
Pastoral Minister Maureen Sheehan
Rabbi Michael Feinberg
Rabbi Deborah Bronstein
Rabbi Dr. David Fox Sandmel
Rabbi Michael Rothbaum
Rev. Angie Boissevain
Rev. Jim Conn
Rev. Deniray Mueller
Rev. John Fernandes
Rev. Joseph Easley
Rev. Mark Lukens
Rev. Mark Lancaster
Rev. Laura Speir
Rev. Frank Bergen
Rev. Kay Woike
Rev. Diane Mettam
Rev. Julie Peeples
Rev. Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry
Rev. Dr. Leo Bistak
Rev. Dr. Allison Tanner
Rev. Dr. Sunny Kang
Rev. Dr. Randy Orso
Rev. Dr. Lyle J. Dykstra
Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley-Rea
Rev. Dr. Paul Ziese
Reverend Emmanuel Orendain
Reverend Michael Coburn
Reverend Patricia Mitchell
Sister Dee Peppard, BVM
Sister Mary Carr
Sister Mary Brigid Clingman, OP
Sister Carol Boschert
Sister Pat Reinhart
Sister Joan Agro, O.P.
Sister Mary Cecile Gunelson
Sister Elizabeth Fuhr
Sister Mary Ann Penner
Sister Kathleen Carr
Sister Regina Wagner
Sister Nancy McCarthy
Sister Carole Freking
Sister Mary Ellen Meckley
Sister Mary Healey
Sister Nancy Miller
Sister Emily TeKolste
Sister Mary Mahowald
Sister Mary Dostal
Sister Mary Synkewecz, RSM
Sister Rose Mary Meyer
Sr. Barbara Battista
Sr. Mary Bradish
Sr. Karen Conover
Sr. Carol Spiegel
Sr. C Jean Hayen, BVM
Sr. Teri Hadro, BVM
The Rev Christine Payden-Travers
The Venerable Catherine Cooke