



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

April 15, 2019

Ms. Jill Marie Bussey
Director of Advocacy
Catholic Legal Immigration Network
8757 Georgia Avenue, Suite 850
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Ms. Bussey:

Thank you for your March 13, 2019 letter to the Department of Homeland Security.

I appreciate your concern for the situation in Venezuela and your interest in its designation for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). The Department of Homeland Security Secretary's authority to designate a country for TPS and to extend or terminate a country's existing TPS 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.

The decision to make an initial TPS designation is purely discretionary. To designate a foreign country for TPS, the Secretary must find, after consultation with appropriate Government agencies, one or more of the following: (1) there is an ongoing armed conflict within the country that would pose a serious threat to the personal safety of the country's nationals if they were returned; (2) there has been an environmental disaster resulting in a substantial, but temporary, disruption of the living conditions in the area affected, the country is temporarily unable to handle adequately the return of its nationals, and the country has officially requested TPS designation; or (3) there exist extraordinary and temporary conditions in the country that prevent nationals from returning in safety, and the Secretary does not find that permitting the country's nationals to remain temporarily in the United States would be contrary to the national interest of the United States. *See* INA § 244(b)(1).

USCIS understands your concern for the situation in Venezuela, and is continuing to monitor conditions in the country. USCIS has other humanitarian programs and relief measures that may also be available to eligible Venezuelans outside of any consideration for designation of TPS. Other immigration relief measures that may be of assistance to Venezuelan nationals affected by the current conditions in Venezuela can be found at:
www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/special-situations.

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Thank you again for your letter. Please feel free to share this information with the co-signers of your letter. I look forward to my participation in the CLINIC Convening in May.

Respectfully,



L. Francis Cissna
Director