

March 30, 2018

Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen  
Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20016

**RE: REQUEST TO EXTEND TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS FOR NEPAL FOR 18 MONTHS**

Dear Secretary Nielsen:

On behalf of the 33 undersigned national, state, and local faith-based organizations, as well as 242 faith leaders from across traditions, we respectfully request that you extend Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Nepal for 18 months. Our call stems from our shared values rooted in our sacred texts to love our neighbor and welcome the stranger, the sojourner among us. As Leviticus 19:33-34 reminds us: "Any immigrant who lives with you must be treated as if they were one of your citizens. You must love them as yourself, because you were immigrants in the land of Egypt; I am the LORD your God."

The current eighteen-month grant of TPS for approximately 9,000 Nepali TPS holders will expire on June 24, 2018. As we approach the April 25, 2018 deadline to decide whether to extend Nepal's TPS designation, we call on you to recognize that TPS was created to provide protection to those in the United States when it is unsafe for their return home - precisely the conditions Nepal faces today. To terminate TPS for Nepal would mean turning our backs on the vulnerable Nepalis whom we pledged to protect, and would place considerable burdens on the country as it struggles to recover from natural disaster.

Nepal was designated for TPS on June 24, 2015 after it was struck by a 7.8 magnitude earthquake on April 25, 2015, followed by a series of massive aftershocks. The devastating earthquakes immediately affected more than 8 million people, over a quarter of Nepal's total population. About 9,000 people died as a result of the earthquake, and 22,000 people were injured. The earthquake caused significant damage or destruction to over 755,000 homes. In 2016, the administration extended Nepal's TPS designation for 18 months because most homes, schools, health centers, and other buildings had yet to be reconstructed. In addition, Nepal's recovery from the natural disaster was slowed by serious intervening factors, including bureaucratic issues in dispersing aid and civil unrest, and blockades preventing necessary materials from entering the country. Nepal's rebuilding efforts were paralyzed for months by political conflicts. The blockades along the southern border also deprived the Nepali people of critical resources such as food, oil, and other aid, putting many at risk of starvation, including three million children under the age of 5.

A dire humanitarian crisis persists in Nepal as a direct result of the earthquake and aftershocks that devastated the country in 2015.

Today, Nepal faces a dire humanitarian situation, especially for those residing in the 14 districts most devastated by the earthquake, as well as those in rural, hard-to-access areas. Destroyed roads and other infrastructure prevents huge portions of the population from accessing adequate food, clean water, medicine, and other basic needs. Indeed, the U.S. government recognized that large-scale reconstruction would likely not be feasible to begin until 2017 in the most recent Federal Register Notice extending TPS for Nepal. In late 2017, a new natural disaster further impeded reconstruction efforts and

humanitarian recovery. From June 2017 to September 2017, the country experienced devastating floods and landslides, affecting a third of the country, over 1.7 million people. Several districts recorded the heaviest rainfall in 60 years, and over 80 percent of land in the southern Terai region (the breadbasket of Nepal) was inundated by floodwaters, impacting the transportation of food and other resources to the rest of the country. The floods delayed ongoing rebuilding efforts and damaged vital infrastructure, including 65,000 homes. Furthermore, 80 schools across 28 districts were destroyed and 710 damaged, while ten health centers were destroyed and 64 partially damaged.

Housing insecurity, economic instability, and reconstruction challenges have forced millions of Nepalis to remain displaced.

Of the 2.8 million people displaced by the 2015 earthquake, it is estimated that 2.6 million remain displaced - or nearly 93% of the original displaced population - still live in temporary shelters, unprotected from the elements and Nepal's harsh seasons. As of February 2018, the Nepali government reported that only 100,000 houses had been rebuilt. Housing insecurity would only be exacerbated by the return of 9,000 TPS holders. The housing reconstruction program in Nepal is unfinished and profoundly inadequate to address current housing needs and a return of 9,000 Nepali TPS holders and their family members. Reconstruction in the public sector, such as in cultural heritage sites, schools, hospitals, and public buildings, has barely begun. As a result, failure to extend TPS would put approximately 9,000 TPS holders and their families at tremendous risk of housing, food, and water insecurity, as well as facing a lack of access to health care, education, and other services.

The International Labour Organization estimates that the earthquake cost Nepal \$7 billion in losses and damages. The earthquake directly resulted in 700,000 Nepalis falling into poverty. If TPS is not extended, Nepal and the region will be further destabilized as the country depends heavily on remittances (money sent home from abroad). Close to 50 percent of Nepalis rely on financial help from relatives abroad to survive. Nepal receives almost 30 percent of its overall GDP from remittances, making Nepal one of the top five nations with such a heavy reliance on remittances.

Our collective moral, religious, and American values call for extending Nepal's TPS designation for 18 months.

The U.S. has a long history of offering protection to victims of catastrophic events, war, violence, and natural disasters. TPS reflects our nation's commitment to protecting people from being returned to life-threatening conditions, our compassion, and our dedication to welcome -- values that were manifested in the TPS statute enacted by Congress in 1990. As communities of faith, we seek a just and humane immigration system that upholds the dignity and humanity of all people. Extending TPS for Nepal is a compassionate and just choice for both Americans and Nepali TPS holders. Our moral and legal obligations call on us to uphold our values of hospitality, generosity, and compassion.

Nepal remains unable to welcome the safe return of nearly 9,000 Nepali TPS holders due to the massive size of the catastrophe, its recentness, and intervening factors that have tragically slowed recovery. DHS should be responding to this humanitarian crisis by upholding our promises to the Nepali people and by allowing Nepali TPS holders to remain here in the United States. As members of faith-based organizations across the country, we urge you to join us in standing shoulder-to-shoulder with our Nepali brothers and sisters in need.

We pray you have compassion in your discernment process and extend Nepal's TPS designation for at least another 18 months. Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have any questions, please contact Jill Marie Bussey at [jbussey@cliniclegal.org](mailto:jbussey@cliniclegal.org) or 301-565-4844 or Meredith Owen at [mowen@cwsglobal.org](mailto:mowen@cwsglobal.org).

Sincerely,

### **Faith Leaders**

Brother Jerry Rivers, Church of Christ  
Brother Mark Schroeder, O.F.M., Franciscans for Justice  
Brother Michael Potvin-Frost, Order of Franciscan Hermits  
Cantor Vera Broekhuysen, Temple Emanu-El of Haverhill  
Chair of MN Conference Immigration Team UCC Diane Haines, Mayflower United Church of Christ  
Chaplain C. Brent Hoy-Bianchi, Renown Regional Medical Center  
Chaplain Francesca Wigle, Third Order of Franciscans  
College Chaplain Dr. Rick Axtell, Centre College  
Deacon Michael Turner, St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church  
Deacon Leo Bistak, St. Malachi  
Deacon Thomas Mariconda, Regional Deacon Naugatuck Valley  
Director Sandy Sorensen, United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries (Washington Office)  
Dr. Bill Mefford, Fig Tree Revolution  
Dr. Brian Kaylor, Churchnet  
Dr. J. Alfred Smith, Jr., Allen Temple Baptist Church  
Dr. Mary Elizabeth Hunt, Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual (WATER)  
Dr. Russell Jeung, New Hope Covenant Church  
Elder Ken Grenz, Valley View  
Elder Maria Studer, First Presbyterian Church Levittown, NY  
Faith Leader Elaine Johnson, African Methodist Episcopal  
Fr. Toting Tronco, Simbayan Ecumenical Fellowship  
Fr. Jim Hoffman OFM, OFM Franciscan Friars  
Dr. Lois Schroeder, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
Miss Kate Krogstad, First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Redlands  
Mr. Ewins Julien, Upper Room Ministry  
Mr. Gerry Lee, Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns  
Mr. Rob Abbot, PAX Community  
Ms. Charlotte Stone, Southern Hills United Methodist Church  
Ms. Jean Stokan, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Institute Justice Team  
Ms. Linda McKiernan-Allen, West Street Christian  
Ms. Louisa Merchant, All Saints' Episcopal Church  
Ms. Mary Kozmik, St. Paul's Monastery  
Pastor Anne Hall, Lutheran Church in the San Juans  
Pastor Barry Kreider, Pilgrims Mennonite Church  
Pastor Don Benton, Sunrise United Methodist Church  
Peace and Social Justice Coordinator Karen Jackson, Christ the Servant Catholic Faith Community  
Rabbi Mike Comins, Temple Emanuel, Dallas  
Rabbi David Greenstein, Congregation Shomrei Emunah  
Rabbi Elizabeth Richman, Jews United for Justice

Rabbi Elliott Tepperman, Bnai Keshet  
Rabbi Elyse Wechterman, Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association  
Rabbi Eric Solomon, Beth Meyer Synagogue  
Rabbi Jessica Shimberg, The Little Minyan Kehillah  
Rabbi Megan GoldMarche, Silverstein Base Hillel  
Rabbi Michael Feinberg, Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition  
Rabbi Suzanne Singer, Temple Beth El  
Rev. Phillip Grigsby, SICM (Schenectady Inner City Ministry)  
Rev. Bonnie Kline Smeltzer, University Baptist and Brethren Church  
Rev. Brenda Froisland, Bethel Lutheran Church  
Rev. Diane Faires, St. Paul's Christian Church  
Rev. Dr. Mary Blaufuss, United Church of Christ  
Rev. Dru Ferguson, St. Bedes Episcopal Church  
Rev. Elaine Schoepf, Seaside United Church of Christ  
Rev. Gayle Whittemore, Congregational Church of North Barnstead, United Church of Christ  
Rev. Jane Van Zandt, Grace Episcopal, Manchester NH  
Rev. Karen Jackson, Project Hospitality  
Rev. Katherine Culpepper, First Presbyterian Church  
Rev. Laura Martin, Rock Spring UCC  
Rev. Marilyn Chilcote, St. John's Presbyterian, Berkeley  
Rev. Michael Coburn, Church of the Ascension  
Rev. Natalie Chamberlain, First Congregational-UCC, Tulare  
Rev. Sandie Richards, First UMC of San Fernando  
Rev. Steven Klemz, Zion Lutheran Church  
Rev. Willie Allen-Faiella, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
Rev. Dr. Alan Jones, St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Sacramento  
Rev. Emily Lin, Chinese Community United Methodist Church  
Rev. Kayla Bonewell, Church of the Open Arms & Cathedral of Hope  
Rev. Kent Gilbert, Union Church  
Rev. Mark Lancaster, Generous Heart Sangha  
Rev. Pamela Werner, St. James Lutheran  
Rev. Pat Jones, Living Water  
Rev. Paul Elder, St. Aidan's Episcopal Church  
Rev. Rebecca Ninke, Brooklyn Lutheran  
Rev. Robert Wagener, Green Valley United Methodist Church  
Rev. Talitha Arnold, United Church of Santa Fe  
Rev. Teresa Jones, Sacred Space  
Rev. Will McGarvey, Community Presbyterian Church of Pittsburg, CA  
Rev. Adlerette Kebreau, Jesus is Lord Church  
Rev. Ailsa Guardiola Gonzalez, First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Tucson, AZ  
Rev. Barbara J. Maxwell Barbara Maxwell, Episcopal Diocese of Ohio  
Rev. Barbara Martin, Union Congregational United Church of Christ  
Rev. Beth O'Malley, Hood College  
Rev. Beverly Snedeker, First UCC of Houston  
Rev. Carol McVetty, American Baptist Churches, Metro Chicago  
Rev. CC Coltrain, Center for Spiritual Living Greater Dayton  
Rev. Cecil Prescod, Ainsworth United Church of Christ  
Rev. Dawn King, Dixon United Methodist Church

Rev. Dawn Weaks, Connection Christian  
Rev. Deacon Nancy Lanman, Central UMC (retired)  
Rev. Diane Mettam, United Methodist Church  
Rev. Dr. William Olewiler, Fleming Island United Methodist  
Rev. Dr. Beth Johnson, Palomar Unitarian Universalist Fellowship  
Rev. Dr. David Ames, St. Martin's Church  
Rev. Dr. Dennis Orsen, Emmanuel Lutheran Church  
Rev. Dr. Edward Barrett, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd  
Rev. Dr. Jo Anne Lyon, The Wesleyan Church  
Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, United Church of Christ  
Rev. Dr. Robert Kaku Gunn, Empty Hand Zen Center  
Rev. Dr. Allison Tanner, Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church  
Rev. Dr. Becky Edmiston-Lange, Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church  
Rev. Dr. Chuck Currie, Pacific University Center for Peace and Spirituality  
Rev. Dr. Cindy Jacobsen, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer  
Rev. Dr. David Hindman, Gloucester-Mathews Charge  
Rev. Dr. David Schoen, United Church of Christ  
Rev. Dr. Earl Trent Jr., Florida Avenue Baptist Church  
Rev. Dr. Gary Doupe, First United Methodist Church  
Rev. Dr. Janet Wolfe, First Presbyterian, Marshfield WI (retired)  
Rev. Dr. Jerome King Del Pino, The United Methodist Church  
Rev. Dr. Jessica Anschutz, Cold Spring/South Highland United Methodist Church  
Rev. Dr. Katherine Epperly, Disciple Home Missions, Christian Church Disciples of Christ  
Rev. Dr. Kathryn Nix, Trinity United Methodist Church  
Rev. Dr. Paul Ziese, MacArthur Park Lutheran Church  
Rev. Dr. Samuel Speers, Vassar College  
Rev. Dr. Suzanne Allen, United Methodist Church  
Rev. Dr. Tom Pasmore, Avenue United Methodist Church  
Rev. Eliot Moss, Grace Episcopal Church  
Rev. Elizabeth Congdon, Old First Church, Middletown, NJ  
Rev. Emilia Halstead, First Congregational Church UCC, Concord  
Rev. Frederick Morris, North Hills UMC Hispanic Mission  
Rev. Gail Kinney, Meriden (NH) Congregational Church, UCC  
Rev. Glenda Survance, First Christian Church  
Rev. Heather Branton, Community Church of Atascadero  
Rev. James Conn, United Methodist  
Rev. Jan LaVake, Our Saviors Lutheran, Oshkosh WI  
Rev. Janet M. Cooper Nelson, The Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life, Brown University  
Rev. Jason Bense, Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer  
Rev. Jason Lee, Clarkston International Bible Church  
Rev. Jennifer Amy-Dressler, The Duluth Congregational Church  
Rev. Jessica Vacketta, University Christian Church  
Rev. Jim Dale, First United Methodist Church  
Rev. Jimmie Hawkins, Office of Public Witness  
Rev. John Gregory-Davis, Meridne Congregational Church, UCC  
Rev. John Long, First Presbyterian Church  
Rev. John McCullough, Church World Service, Inc.  
Rev. John Shaffer, Stanwood United Methodist Church

Rev. John Ward-Diorio, St. Paul's United Church of Christ  
Rev. Julie Wilson, Calvary United Methodist  
Rev. Kara Wagner Sherer, St. John's Episcopal Church  
Rev. Kathy Donley, Emmanuel Baptist Church  
Rev. Kay Woike, Church of the Nativity UCC  
Rev. Kenneth Heintzelman, Shadow Rock United Church of Christ  
Rev. Kim Mislin Cran, First Congregational Church UCC  
Rev. Kris Bjerke-Ulliman, St. Timothy Lutheran Church  
Rev. Laura Folkwein, University Congregational UCC  
Rev. Laura Sinche, Baltimore Lutheran Campus Ministry  
Rev. LeDayne Polaski, Bautistas por la Paz  
Rev. Linda Jones, Barnesville First United Methodist Church  
Rev. Lindsay Louise Biddle, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Rev. Maren Tirabassi, Second Christian Congregational Church, Kittery, Maine  
Rev. Marilyn Chilcote, St. John's Presbyterian  
Rev. Martha Brimm, Chapel of the Cross  
Rev. Martha Sexton, St. Mark Presbyterian  
Rev. Mary Garner, St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
Rev. Mary Jo Bradshaw, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
Rev. Mary Kay Sauter, Plymouth Congregational Church  
Rev. Mary Kay Will, United Methodist Church (retired)  
Rev. Mary Lee-Clark, Second Congregational Church, U.C.C.  
Rev. Merle Showers, University United Methodist Church  
Rev. Michael Mulberry, Billings First Congregational (UCC)  
Rev. Ned Wight, Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock  
Rev. Patricia Welch, Northgate Free Methodist Church  
Rev. Patrick Walker, Susquehanna Conference UMC  
Rev. Paul Hagedorn, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Rev. Robin Brooks, Epiphany Lutheran Church  
Rev. Ross Carmichael, St. Andrew Lutheran Church  
Rev. Sandi John, Pastoral Counseling and Spiritual Direction  
Rev. Sandra Strauss, Pennsylvania Council of Churches  
Rev. Seth Kaper-Dale, The Reformed Church of Highland Park  
Rev. Steve Garnaas-Holmes, St. Matthew's United Methodist Church  
Rev. Sue Joiner, First Congregational UCC  
Rev. Susan Gregory-Davis, Meridne Congregational Church, UCC  
Rev. Taryn Mattice, Protestant Cooperative Ministry at Cornell University  
Rev. Thomas Shea, Congregation of Holy Cross  
Rev. Tina Lang, First United Methodist  
Rev. Tom Hagood, Columbia Presbyterian Church  
Rev. Vanessa Cardinale, South Congregational Church  
Rev. Wilfredo Benitez, Flushing Interfaith Council  
Rev. Yolanda Roger Anthony Mapes, Mighty Companions Ministries  
Roshi Joan Halifax, Upaya Zen Center  
Secretary, Mystic Area Ecumenical Council Julia Porter, St. Mark's Episcopal Church  
Sensei Peter Joyru Harris, Treetop Zen Center  
Sister Andrea Koverman, Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati  
Sister Cynthia Marie Babyak, Felician Sisters

Sister Joan Quinn, Sisters of IHM  
Sister Kate O'Donnell OSF, Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia  
Sister Angelica Smialowicz, Felician Sisters of North America  
Sister Brigid Lawlor, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd  
Sister Carol Boschert, Sisters of the Most Precious Blood of O'Fallon, MO  
Sister Carren Herring, Sisters of Mercy  
Sister Ceil Roeger, Dominican Sisters of Houston  
Sister Christelle Sawicki, Felician Sisters of North America  
Sister Christine Stankiewicz, Felician Sisters  
Sister Dorothy Moczygemba, Felician Sisters  
Sister Dorothy Pagosa, Sisters of St. Joseph-TOSF  
Sister Eilis McCulloh, Sisters of the Humility of Mary  
Sister Francine Sousa, Felician Sisters  
Sister Janet Luecke, Sisters of St. Francis  
Sister Kathleen Bauer, School Sisters of Notre Dame - Central Pacific Province  
Sister Laura Jean Spaeth, School Sisters of Notre Dame  
Sister Louise Alff, Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities  
Sister Marcelline Koch, Dominican Sisters  
Sister Mary Cynthia Ann Machlik, Felician Sisters  
Sister Mary Jessica Terek, Felician Sisters  
Sister Mary Louis Rustowicz, Felician Sisters  
Sister Mary McCauley, Sisters of Charity, BVM  
Sister Mary Wendeln C.P.P.S., Sisters of the Precious Blood Dayton, Ohio  
Sister Maryann Mueller, Felician Sisters  
Sister Maureen Helak, Felician Franciscan Sisters  
Sister Nancy Jamroz, Felician Sisters of North America  
Sister Rose Therese Nolta, Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters  
Sister Rosemarie Goins, Felician Franciscan Sisters of North America  
Sister Sara Aldridge, Sisters of St. Francis of Tiffin, OH  
Sister Theresa Pietrzak, Felician Sisters  
Sister Therese Bangert, Social Justice Coordinator  
Social Responsibility Leader Van Thawng, Grater Houston Burmese Christian Fellowship  
Sr. Rose Mary Meyer, Sisters of Charity, BVM  
Sr. Anna Marie Reha, School Sisters of Notre Dame  
Sr. Barbara Juskiewicz, Felician Sisters  
Sr. Christine Garcia, School Sisters of Notre Dame  
Sr. Clare Millea, Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus  
Sr. LaDonna Manternach, Sisters of Charity, BVM  
Sr. Mary Faith Balawejder, Felician Sisters of North America  
Teacher Maureen Shannon-Chapple, InsightLA  
The Rev. Christine Payden-Travers, retired Episcopal priest  
The Rev. Teresa Danieleley, Episcopal Diocese of Missouri  
The Rev. Anne Vouga, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church  
The Rev. Canon Nancy Ross, Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral  
The Rev. Dr. James Boston, St. George's Episcopal Church  
The Rev. Dr. Jonathan Barton, Virginia Council of Churches  
The Rev. Dr. Roger Willer, Grace Lutheran Church  
The Rev. Elizabeth Maxwell, Church of the Ascension

The Rev. Fr. Peter De Franco, OSB, St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church  
The Rev. Jeffrey Spencer, Niles Discovery Church  
The Rev. Sarah Nichols, Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles  
The Rev. Susan Quinn Bryan, Honorably Retired, Presbyterian Church USA  
The Rev. Susan Stiles Susan Stiles, St. Augustine's Episcopal Church  
The Rev. Wilma Reichard, Ladera Community Church  
The Reverend Johanna Young, St. John's Episcopal Church  
The Venerable Catherine Cooke, Cathedral Church of St. Paul  
U.S. Director Carol Bremer-Bennett, World Renew  
United States Margaret Johnson, Trinity Lutheran  
United States Michael Vosler, UCC Petaluma, CA

### **Faith Organizations**

Asbury United Methodist Church  
Board of Social Action Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ  
Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Boston  
Catholic Charities Inc. of Jackson - Migrant Support Center  
Catholic Charities of West Tennessee  
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.  
Centro Comunitario CEUS  
Church World Service  
Community of Sant' Egidio  
DC-Maryland Justice for Our Neighbors  
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries  
East Texas Justice For Our Neighbors  
Franciscan Action Network  
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA - JPIC  
Immigrant Family Support Network  
Jesuit Refugee Service/USA  
Jesuit Social Research Institute  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious  
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service  
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Justice for Our Neighbors  
New Hampshire Conference United Church of Christ Immigrant and Refugee Support Group  
Office of Social Justice, Christian Reformed Church in North America  
Oregon Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice  
Pax Christi Illinois  
PICO National Network  
Schenectady Inner City Ministry  
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Institute Justice Team  
Sisters of Saint Francis of Perpetual Adoration  
Unitarian Universalist Mass Action Network