

A Resolution in Support of Massachusetts' Immigrant Community with Special Emphasis on Those at Risk of Losing Temporary Protected Status (TPS) DRAFT

Submitted by:

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THE RESOLUTION

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts re-affirms the dignity and humanity of all people regardless of their immigration status and professes our solidarity with all immigrant communities being targeted and terrorized. And be it further,

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts denounces discrimination against individuals because of their immigration status and upholds the rights of all to worship freely without fear. And be it further,

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts recognizes the crucial and unique contribution of immigrants who hold Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to the Commonwealth and would like to publicly state our

support of immigrants in our community with TPS whose current legal status is threatened or, in some cases, already revoked. And be it further,

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts directs the Secretary of Convention to convey our support of the Massachusetts TPS Committee and National TPS Alliance by co-issuing a statement with Episcopal City Mission to the Massachusetts Senators at Representatives in jurisdiction of the Diocese (Senators Warren and Markey, and Representatives McGovern, Trahan, Auchincloss, Clark, Moulton, Pressley, Lynch, and Keating) urging them to take all actions available to help the TPS Community retain legal status in the United States; And be it further,

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts encourages their worshipping community leaders and members to engage with local organizations that are led by immigrants and advocating for immigrants rights, such as the MA TPS Committee, and re-affirm that their congregations welcome all to worship in their Parishes without regard to immigration status.

EXPLANATION

Every immigrant is also a human being with inherent value but we are living in a place and time where they are not being treated as such. This calls us to take a public position to counter that treatment, as silence would also be also a position but one of acceptance of the status quo. Those with Temporary Protected Status (TPS holders) in our communities come from 17 different countries, and some have been here over 30 years (Somalians), 20 years (El Salvadorians), or 15 years (Haiti), owning property, starting small businesses, and raising citizen children, without ever being given an avenue to regularize their status and become Legal Permanent Residents. Each TPS holder has to renew their status with new extensions every 6-18 months, and are subject to criminal background checks with each renewal, making them some of the most vetted immigrants in the U.S. Consequently, they are also some of the most vulnerable if their status is terminated, because they have provided all of their personal information to the Department of Homeland Security in good faith, including their home addresses. The U.S. government has declared that they intend to cancel TPS for all countries regardless of current conditions, and TPS holders from Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Honduras, Nepal, and Venezuela have already lost their status and work permits as of October 2025.

Additionally, immigrants in Massachusetts are vital to the Commonwealth's economic stability and public service infrastructure, and this is particularly true for TPS holders. A 2025 coalition led by Massachusetts Attorney General Andrea Campbell reported that over 27,780 TPS holders in the state contribute approximately \$598 million in household income and pay around \$134 million in taxes, driving nearly \$464 million in spending power locally (Source: Mass.gov). Nationally, over 1.1 million people have been living and working in the U.S. with TPS. Many among them work in critical public and human services roles that we all rely on. For instance, TPS recipients are a large portion of the Certified Nursing Assistant workforce in hospitals and long-term care settings, and the loss of their contributions put many people receiving long-term care at greater risk (Source: WBUR).

The origin of Temporary Protected Status is closely tied to the efforts of faith communities who, during the Sanctuary Movement in the 80s, drew attention to the unlivable conditions that many Central American immigrants were fleeing, arguing that there needed to be a formal mechanism to protect people from deportation when returning home would be unsafe. This led to the creation of TPS as part of the Immigration Act of 1990. Many of our core faith messages as Episcopalians speak to "welcoming the stranger," and our Baptismal Covenant entails that we make a commitment to "Seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself" and "Strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being." (Source: Episcopalchurch.org)

STATEMENT AGAINST

The church should stay out of political issues, and due to our current climate, immigration is a hot political issue, which could make a public statement controversial.

IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The implementation of this resolution has no financial requirements, and Diocese of MA staff time would be minimal (under 2 hours) due to the offer by Episcopal City Mission to draft the joint statement with the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, where staff would only need to review, approve, and potentially make edits to the letter. Additionally, the resolution only encourages action on behalf of parishes and their members but does not require any.