

FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

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MICHAEL B. SHEEDY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



August 5, 2026

The Honorable Rick Scott
United State Senate
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ashley Moody
United States Senate
387 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support for S. 4814 to Extend Temporary Protected Status and Immigration Reforms

Dear Senators Scott and Moody:

We write to express deep pastoral concern in response to the current state of our immigration system and the human realities involved. The situation is especially daunting for hundreds of thousands of Haitians, Venezuelans, and others who have been relying on temporary protected status (TPS) to live and work lawfully in the United States. So many of these families are left without any legal status or a way to support themselves, all while returning to their country of origin remains unsafe, impractical, and unreasonable because of the ongoing conditions there.

Recognizing the dire humanitarian crisis in Haiti, for example, your colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives voted on a bipartisan basis earlier this year to require the extension of TPS for that country. The Senate version of that same bill (S. 4814) was introduced in June with the support of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Time is now of the essence for the Senate to act.

In recent days, some, including policymakers, have alleged that longtime residents with TPS should have adjusted their status by now. This commentary reveals a fundamental lack of understanding about our immigration system and the dearth of opportunities it offers such persons. TPS does not provide an independent basis for adjustment of status. This leaves families who have been residing in the United States under TPS with very few, if any, options to lawfully remain in the country, no matter how long they have called this land their home, the contributions they have made to its prosperity, or the community and family ties they have established. Only Congress is empowered to create these legal pathways, and such reform is long overdue.

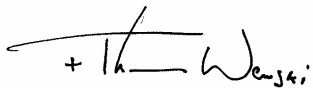
In his [message](#) for the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding, Pope Leo XIV stated, "In every generation, those who have arrived seeking freedom, opportunity and a place to belong have helped to shape the nation's character. To receive them with compassion and generosity is not only an act of charity, but also a recognition of the dignity that belongs to every human person."

We do not ask you to commit yourselves to immigration reform as a rejection of the national interest but as a means of promoting it. Beyond even the positive economic and social contributions made by immigrants, including those in our own state of Florida, the considerations warranting meaningful improvements to our immigration system are profoundly moral in nature. In order to "do things the right way", people must first have realistic options available to them.

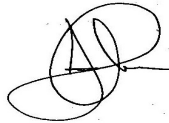
Most urgently, we encourage you to do everything in your power to bring about the passage of S. 4814 to offer certainty to our Haitian brothers and sisters in the short-term, while also working toward broader legislative reforms that include opportunities for long-time residents of our communities to regularize their status. We specifically ask that you prioritize family unity in this context, given the importance of the family as the original cell and foundation of social life.

The Catholic Church remains committed to working with you and your colleagues in Congress to bring about bipartisan reforms of our immigration system. Please be assured of our prayers for you and your service to our nation in this 250th year of its independence.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Rev. Thomas G. Wenski
Archbishop of Miami



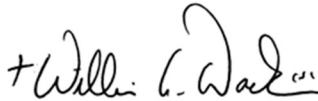
Most Rev. John G. Noonan
Bishop of Orlando



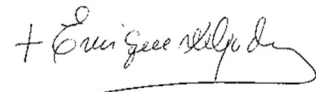
Most Rev. Gregory L. Parkes
Bishop of St. Petersburg



Most Rev. Erik T. Pohlmeier
Bishop of St. Augustine



Most Rev. William A. Wack CSC
Bishop of Pensacola-Tallahassee



Most Rev. Enrique Delgado
Auxiliary Bishop of Miami



Most Rev. Manuel de Jesús Rodríguez
Bishop of Palm Beach



Most Rev. Emilio Biosca Agüero, OFM, Cap.
Bishop of Venice

cc: Michelle Gress, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Michael B. Sheedy, Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops