

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 20, 2013

The Honorable Rand Beers
Acting Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20528

Acting Secretary Beers:

In light of the tremendous devastation suffered by the Philippines as a result of Typhoon Haiyan, we write to express our deep concern about the impact of this tragedy on Filipinos in the United States. We ask that you consider granting Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to eligible Filipino nationals within the United States and additional avenues of relief for certain Filipinos with U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident family members in the U.S.

As you know, Typhoon Haiyan has wrought unparalleled destruction and tragic loss of life in the Philippines. The U.S. Joint Typhoon Warning Center estimated the storm's sustained winds at 195 miles per hour at landfall, which if confirmed would make Haiyan one of the most powerful storms in recorded history. Hundreds of thousands of people are displaced with no shelter or clean water and millions face food shortages.

The United States has granted TPS to other nationals after similarly traumatic events. Following Hurricane Mitch in 1999, the United States granted TPS to Honduran and Nicaraguan nationals; following several earthquakes in Central America in 2001, the United States granted TPS to Salvadorans; and following the earthquake in Haiti in 2010, the United States granted TPS to Haitians. Victims of Typhoon Haiyan clearly meet the eligibility requirements for TPS, and we urge you to extend this designation as soon as possible. Providing TPS is critical to humanitarian relief efforts as it both protects individuals who would be endangered by returning to their country of origin and it allows the home country more time to recover before accepting returnees.

It is important to note that granting TPS to Filipino nationals will not endanger our security. An alien is ineligible for TPS if he has a criminal background or poses a threat to national security. The decision to deny, withdraw or terminate TPS is in the sole discretion of the government; there is no judicial review of such a determination. Moreover, TPS is not a backdoor to U.S. citizenship. TPS does not make a beneficiary eligible for legal permanent resident status or U.S. citizenship. When the TPS designation of a country is terminated, beneficiaries revert to the same immigration status they maintained before the designation.

We also ask that you consider humanitarian parole and expedited visa processing for Filipinos who have U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident relatives in the U.S. and approved or pending family petitions, especially Filipinos who have been orphaned, lost relatives in the storm or

suffer other serious hardships. We also ask that you consider an automatic extension of visas, in categories where an extension is feasible, for Filipinos currently present in the U.S. Lastly, we ask that you consider temporarily suspending deportations to the Philippines and utilizing alternatives to detention in appropriate cases.

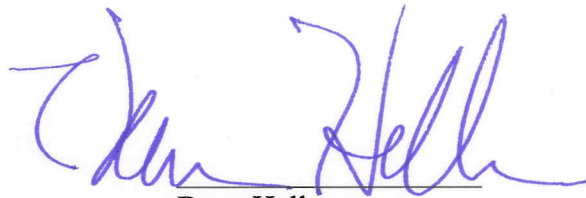
The United States has demonstrated its commitment to assisting the Philippines with the recovery effort through foreign aid, military assistance and relief supplies, but we must **also** assist the victims' families in whatever way possible. Therefore, we respectfully request that you extend TPS to Filipino nationals residing in the United States and support the reunification of U.S. citizens and their Filipino family members.

Thank you for your consideration.

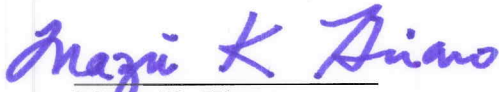
Sincerely,



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Dean Heller
United States Senator



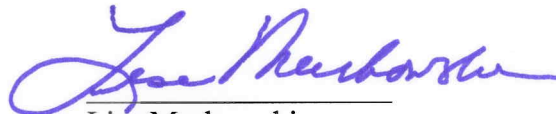
Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Marco Rubio
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



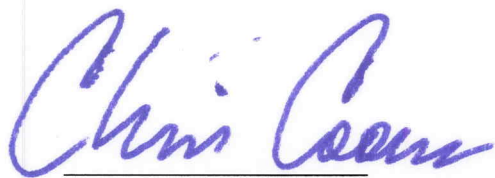
Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator



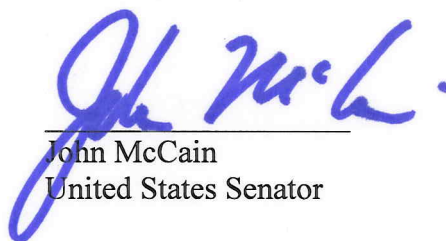
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



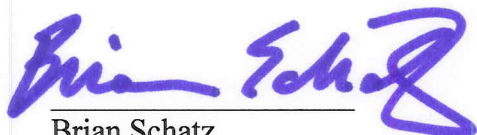
Mark Kirk
United States Senator



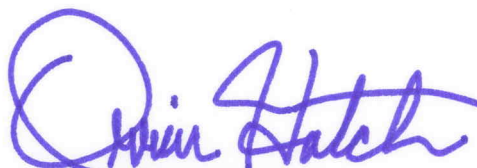
Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



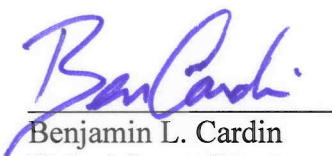
John McCain
United States Senator



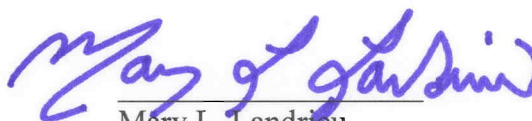
Brian Schatz
United States Senator



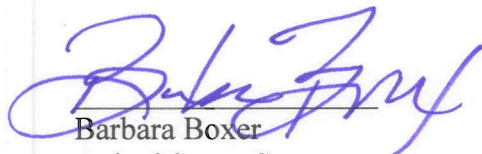
Orrin G. Hatch
United States Senator



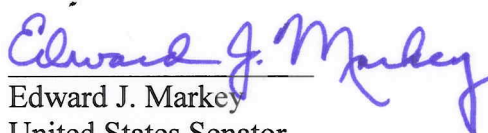
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Mary L. Landrieu
United States Senator



Barbara Boxer
United States Senator



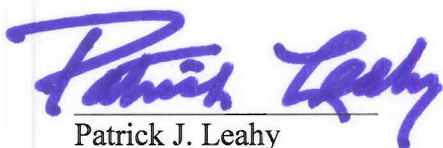
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



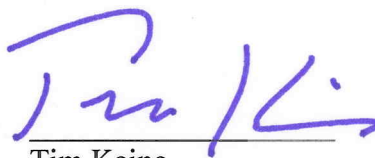
Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator



Harry Reid
United States Senator



Patrick J. Leahy
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator