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# Communities in Peril: The Dispersion of Temporary Protected Status Populations throughout Massachusetts

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# **Communities in Peril: The Dispersion of Temporary Protected Status Populations throughout Massachusetts**

by Phillip Granberry, PhD, Trevor Mattos, and Lorna Rivera, PhD

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**THE MAURICIO GASTÓN INSTITUTE  
FOR LATINO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
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# Communities in Peril: The Dispersion of Temporary Protected Status Populations throughout Massachusetts

## Introduction

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Massachusetts is estimated to have over 12,000 residents with Temporary Protected Status (TPS).<sup>1</sup> TPS is a non-immigrant status granted when a country's nationals in the United States cannot return safely or, in certain circumstances, when the country is unable to handle the return of its nationals adequately.<sup>2</sup> This legal status was instituted as part of the 1990 Immigration Act, which was sponsored by Senator Edward M. Kennedy and signed into law by President George H. W. Bush. TPS beneficiaries are not removable from the United States, can obtain an employment authorization document (EAD), and may be granted travel authorization.<sup>3</sup>

Recently the Trump administration has decided to terminate the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for Nicaragua, Haiti, and El Salvador with effective date, respectively, of January, July, and September of 2019. Honduras may well be next. It is urgent to understand the impact that such decisions will have, not only on the daily lives of immigrant communities but also on the regions and towns where these immigrants have settled. In this report, we aim to begin this conversation by estimating the number of foreign nationals whose lives face profound disruption when their TPS is terminated.

## Methodology

Since the inception of TPS, residents from 19 countries have been, at one time or another, granted TPS. As of December 2017, the number is 10 (see Table 1). The Congressional Research Service (CRS) provided an approximate number of individuals from TPS countries as of October 12, 2017.<sup>4</sup> The Massachusetts estimates are from the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA Coalition).<sup>5</sup>

**Figure 1: TPS Populations for the United States and for Massachusetts**

Country	Designation Year	Expiration Date	Expected Registrants	Individuals with TPS	MIRA Estimates for Massachusetts
El Salvador	2001	March 9, 2018	195,000	262,528	6,058
Honduras	1999	Jan. 5, 2018	57,000	86,031	834
Haiti	2010	Jan. 22, 2018	46,000	58,557	4,735
Nepal	2015	June 24, 2018	8,950	14,791	513
Syria	2012	March 31, 2018	5,800	6,916	153
Nicaragua	1999	Jan. 5, 2018	2,550	5,306	17
Yemen	2017	Sept. 3, 2018	1,000	1,116	10
Sudan	1997	Nov. 2, 2018	450	1,048	3
Somalia	1991	Sept. 17, 2018	250	499	1
South Sudan	2011	May 2, 2019	70	77	2
Total			317,070	436,869	12,326

The CRS provided estimates of TPS population by country. They report an estimate of expected registrants and individuals with TPS. Expected registrants and individuals with TPS differ. The estimates of expected registrants are from the most recent Federal Register notices for each country. These data represent the number of individuals who registered during the previous registration period. Individuals with TPS are from data provided to CRS by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). These data include some individuals who have adjusted to another status and may include individuals who have left the country or died.<sup>6</sup>

The CSR does not provide TPS estimates for Massachusetts. However, the Center for American Progress estimates that a total of 9,800 TPS residents in Massachusetts come from either El Salvador (5,000), Haiti (2,700), or Honduras (2,100).<sup>7</sup> The Center for Migration Studies also estimates that 5,000 Salvadorans in Massachusetts have TPS, but provides no estimates for Haitians and Hondurans.<sup>8</sup>

We use Massachusetts estimates of TPS provided by Senator Edward Markey and reported by the MIRA Coalition. In November 2017, Senator Markey's office requested that the USCIS provide TPS estimates for Massachusetts. These data as reported by

the MIRA Coalition total 12,326 including 6,058 recipients from El Salvador, 4,735 from Haiti, and 834 from Honduras.<sup>9</sup>

Using 2011-2015 data from the American Community Survey (ACS), we estimate the location of TPS residents in Massachusetts for Salvadorans, Haitians, and Hondurans. (The remaining seven countries covered by TPS do not have a large enough population in the Commonwealth to generate estimates of people with TPS by cities or towns.) . In order to estimate the TPS population of these three populations in various cities and towns across Massachusetts, we develop TPS rates for each population equal to the proportion of MIRA estimates for Massachusetts to the potential TPS estimates we generate using 2011-2015 ACS data. For example, we estimate that there are 6,260 Honduran noncitizens who could potentially qualify for TPS in Massachusetts. MIRA reports that there are 834 Hondurans with TPS in the commonwealth, giving a TPS rate of 13 percent. We use this procedure to develop TPS estimates for each major group in Massachusetts by city or town specified here below. The ACS data use a geographic area of a Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA). A PUMA does not always match the exact city or town boundary, but we use 1-year ACS data that have too large of a margin of error to use in this analysis to identify the city or town within the PUMA that has a TPS population. For example, we identify Hondurans as residing in Lynn with 1-year ACS data, even though the PUMA we use has a larger geographic boundary than the city of Lynn.

## Dispersion Estimates

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The largest TPS group in Massachusetts is the Salvadoran population, which is primarily located in Boston; other Suffolk County cities, namely Chelsea, Revere, and Winthrop; and in Middlesex County in Somerville and Everett. PUMA boundaries reveal that Salvadorans in Boston with TPS are most likely to reside in East Boston. Additional Salvadoran TPS communities are located in areas north and west of Boston, with estimates of 357 Salvadorans with TPS in Lynn, 268 in Framingham, and 126 in Worcester (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Massachusetts Salvadoran TPS Population**

<b>City</b>	<b>TPS Population</b>
Boston	1,887
Chelsea, Winthrop, Revere	1,413
Somerville & Everett	883
Lynn	357
Framingham	268
Worcester	126
Other City or Town	1,125
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,058</b>

*ACS PUMS 5-year Estimates, 2011-2015*

The population of Haitians with TPS is most concentrated in Boston. PUMA boundaries reveal that Haitians in Boston with TPS are most likely to reside in Roxbury, Mattapan, Hyde Park, and Dorchester. The next largest Haitian TPS groups are found in Brockton and in the Greater Boston cities of Malden, Medford, Somerville, and Everett. There is also a noteworthy group of Haitians with TPS in Randolph (see Table3).

**Table 3: Massachusetts Haitian TPS Population**

<b>City</b>	<b>TPS Population</b>
Boston	1,631
Brockton	692
Malden & Medford	536
Somerville & Everett	397
Randolph	276
Other Cities or Towns	1,204
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,735</b>

*ACS PUMS 5-year Estimates, 2011-2015*

The third largest TPS population in Massachusetts consists of Hondurans. Most Honduran TPS individuals reside in Suffolk County and are more likely to live in Chelsea, Revere, or Winthrop than in the city of Boston. Three other cities have noteworthy Honduran TPS communities: Lynn with 48, New Bedford with 46, and Framingham with 44.

**Table 4: Massachusetts Honduran TPS Population**

<b>City</b>	<b>TPS Population</b>
Chelsea, Revere, Winthrop	407
Boston	130
Lynn	48
New Bedford	46
Framingham	44
Other City or Town	159
<b>Total</b>	<b>834</b>

*ACS PUMS 5-year Estimates, 2011-2015*

## Conclusion

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In 1967 the United Nations established a “Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees,” in which member states agreed that refugees should not be returned to a country where their life or freedom will be at jeopardy. Today, well over 10,000 people in Massachusetts are TPS holders from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti, threatened with being returned to poverty and violence in countries they fled in the past. Further, over 5,300 children in the Commonwealth - American citizens who were born here - have parents who could soon be expelled from the country. What will be the impact on the futures of thousands of children when their parents are deported and families are torn apart? What will be the negative impact on the state’s workforce and on the economic development of local communities that have high numbers of TPS individuals? What will be the impact worldwide when the United States demonstrates contempt for the human rights of refugees?

Those opposed to continuing TPS argue that TPS encourages illegal immigration to the United States, but TPS refugees are in this country with formal authorization from the government. They are productive workers who contribute billions to the U.S. economy and have raised thousands of children who are U.S. citizens. Some groups such as Salvadorans have had TPS for almost twenty years, so what would be the impact of ending TPS for these immigrant families and their local communities? Indeed, the U.S. government’s military interventions in Central America during the 1980s destabilized the region to the point that today there is still ongoing violence and political unrest in El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. For these reasons, an alternative legislative solution is urgently needed to prevent endangering the lives of TPS individuals when they are deported and forced to return to unsafe conditions in their native countries. We believe the U.S. government should provide a pathway for legal permanent residency for TPS individuals. Legislative action is needed to protect these long-term residents of the United States. One proposed remedy is the ASPIRE Act, H.R. 4384, that would let every person covered by TPS on January 1, 2017, apply for permanent residency. This bill, sponsored by Rep. Yvette Clark [D-NY-9], has been referred on 12/13/2017 to the Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> MIRA Coalition (2017). Temporary Protected Status (TPS): An overview. Retrieved from <https://www.miracoalition.org/images/Documents/TPS-factsheet-Nov92017.pdf> (Accessed December 15, 2017)

<sup>2</sup> United States Citizenship and Immigration Services [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Wilson, Jill, (2017). Temporary Protected Service: An Overview and Current Issues. Congressional Research Service, Washington D.C.

<sup>5</sup> MIRA Coalition (2017). Op. Cit.

<sup>6</sup> Wilson, Jill, (2017). Op. Cit.

<sup>7</sup> Center for American Progress. (2017). TPS Holders in Massachusetts. Retrieved from [https://cdn.americanprogress.org/content/uploads/2017/10/19130146/101717\\_TPSFactSheet-MA.pdf](https://cdn.americanprogress.org/content/uploads/2017/10/19130146/101717_TPSFactSheet-MA.pdf) (Accessed on December 15, 2017)

<sup>8</sup> Warren, R. & Kerwin, D. (2017). A Statistical and Demographic Profile of the US Temporary Protected Status Populations from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti. *Journal of Migration and Human Study*, 5(3), 577-592.

<sup>9</sup> MIRA Coalition (2017). Op. Cit.

<sup>10</sup> H.R.4384 - ASPIRE-TPS Act of 2017 <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/4384/text>

The Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy at the University of Massachusetts Boston conducts research on and for the Latino population in New England. Our goal is to generate the information and analysis necessary to develop more inclusive public policy and to improve Latino participation in the policy making process. In an effort to present vital information about Latinos to diverse audiences, the Gastón Institute produces demographic profiles for selected Massachusetts and for special populations like people with Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

Our descriptive analysis of individuals with TPS uses American Community Survey (ACS) data to estimate population who are eligible for TPS. Several estimates of people in Massachusetts eligible for TPS exist. We choose those generated by the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition. These estimates are the most recent and complete estimates available at the time of this publication.

One of the goals of the Gastón Institute is to be responsive to the needs of the Latino and policy communities through the research we undertake. Please feel free to contact us with suggestions or requests for specific information.

## About the Authors

**Phillip Granberry** is a social demographer. He worked with various community-based organizations assisting recently arrived U.S. immigrants before earning a Ph.D. in Public Policy from the University of Massachusetts Boston. He has published several articles on the accumulation and use of social capital among Latinos and the sexual health communication of Puerto Rican mothers with their children. In addition to his research and teaching in the Gastón Institute and Economics Department at UMass Boston, he is Senior Researcher in demography for the Boston Planning and Development Agency.

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