

Nearly 17,000 Salvadorans participate in TPS status renewal



San Salvador, March 1 (RHC)-- Nearly 17,000 Salvadorans are waiting anxiously after completing thousands of applications for renewal of the United States Temporary Protection Status (TPS) program which is due to end September 2019, the Foreign Ministry of El Salvador reports.

With the late addition of some 2,318 applicants registered since last month, the number of Salvadorans protected under TPS reached an incredible 16,800. Surprisingly, this figure only represents 8.8 percent of the 190,000 residing in the United States. Considering the programs pending termination and the cost of re-registration nearing \$700, it's surprising the Immigration Office received any applications. However, a statement from the Salvadoran Foreign Ministry said the figure represents a significant increase of over 6,500 since the last re-registration date which only resulted in 10,272 applications.

Over the last 18 years, Salvadoran families have made the U.S. their home, building their families and lives around the refugee status. The announcement of Trump's decision to cut the program was met with loud disapproval from every corner. Political observers say that not only will its removal strongly affect the U.S. economy and that of El Salvador, but similar to the case of the undocumented immigration dilemma, thousands of families will be torn apart and young children will be ripped away from the only life they've ever known.

"It should be the principle of immigration legislation to protect those family units (...) because we are

talking about mixed families, which include Americans," said Jorge Peraza, head of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in northern Central America.

Since January, Trump's administration has canceled TPS for Sudan, Nicaragua, and Haiti. Honduras is the only Latin American country whose TPS program has not been revoked.

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