

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 11, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

On June 5, we sent the attached letter requesting that your administration designate Lebanon for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) in response to the country's regional conflict-driven crisis, growing domestic food insecurity, economic collapse, and a stalled Presidential selection process.<sup>1</sup> We appreciate you authorizing Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) for Lebanese nationals in the United States on July 26, 2024.<sup>2</sup>

In the months since our request, the armed conflict between Hezbollah and Israel has only intensified and worsened the humanitarian emergency. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is reporting increased displacement.<sup>3</sup> Since our last letter, the Department of State has updated its travel advisory to a Level 4: Do Not Travel, stating that "Lebanon's security environment has become even more volatile and unpredictable."<sup>4</sup> The U.S. Embassy is providing crisis support and currently assisting those U.S. citizens and their families who wish to depart Lebanon given the developments on the ground.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Senate, *Letter to DHS Secretary Mayorkas and Secretary of State Blinken Requesting TPS for Lebanon*, <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/Peters-Letter-Urging-DHS-State-Department-to-Designate-Temporary-Protected-Status-for-Individuals-from-Lebanon.pdf> (June 5, 2024).

<sup>2</sup> The White House, *Memorandum on the Deferred Enforced Departure for Certain Lebanese Nationals*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2024/07/26/memorandum-on-the-deferred-enforced-departure-for-certain-lebanese-nationals/> (July 26, 2024).

<sup>3</sup> USAID Press Release, *The United States Announces Humanitarian Assistance to Support Populations Impacted by the Conflict in Lebanon*, <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/oct-04-2024-united-states-announces-humanitarian-assistance-support-populations-impacted-conflict-lebanon> (Oct. 4, 2024).

<sup>4</sup> Department of State, *Travel Advisories, Lebanon Travel Advisory*, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/lebanon-travel-advisory.html> (Sept. 28, 2024).

<sup>5</sup> Department of State, *Crisis Support for U.S. Citizens in Lebanon*, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/ea/us-citizens-requesting-support-in-lebanon.html> (Oct. 4, 2024).

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Given these worsening country conditions and the potential for continued crisis, we respectfully reiterate our request for your administration to designate Lebanon for TPS to protect Lebanese nationals currently in the United States. We also urge you to swiftly issue the Department of Homeland Security implementation guidance for DED.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent request.

Sincerely,



Gary C. Peters  
Chairman  
Committee on Homeland Security  
and Governmental Affairs



Richard J. Durbin  
Chair  
Committee on the Judiciary



Benjamin L. Cardin  
Chairman  
Committee on Foreign Relations

cc: The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken  
Secretary  
Department of State



January 15, 2025

The Honorable Gary C. Peters  
Chairman  
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Peters:

Thank you for your October 11, 2024 letter to President Biden requesting a designation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Lebanon and guidance on implementation of Deferred Enforced Departure (DED). Your letter was referred to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and I am responding on behalf of the Department.

I appreciate the concerns you have outlined regarding the situation in Lebanon and your interest in its designation for TPS. As you know, on October 17, 2024, after careful consideration, including a thorough review of the country conditions and consultation with interagency partners, Secretary Mayorkas announced the designation of Lebanon for TPS for 18 months.<sup>1</sup> On November 27, 2024, DHS published a *Federal Register* notice detailing eligibility requirements and the application process.<sup>2</sup> More information about TPS Lebanon eligibility requirements is available on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) website.<sup>3</sup>

As you noted in your letter, on July 26, 2024, President Joseph Biden issued a memorandum to the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Homeland Security determining it was in the foreign policy interest of the United States to defer through January 25, 2026, the removal of certain Lebanese nationals present in the United States.<sup>4</sup> This memorandum also directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to take appropriate measures to authorize employment for such individuals. On October 18, 2024, DHS published a *Federal Register* notice implementing the president's memorandum and providing information on how individuals

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<sup>1</sup> DHS Press Release, DHS Offers Protections for Lebanese Nationals Currently in the United States, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2024/10/17/dhs-offers-protections-lebanese-nationals-currently-united-states>.

<sup>2</sup> *Designation of Lebanon for Temporary Protected Status*, 89 FR 93641 (Nov. 27, 2024).

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status/temporary-protected-status-designated-country-lebanon>.

<sup>4</sup> *Memorandum on the Deferred Enforced Departure for Certain Lebanese Nationals*, 89 FR 61341 (July 26, 2024).

may apply for DED-based Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) and travel authorization. More information can be found in the *Federal Register* notice.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to TPS, USCIS also offers support that may be available upon request to assist eligible Lebanese nationals who have been affected by conditions there, including the following:

- Change or extension of nonimmigrant status if eligible Haitian nationals are currently in the United States, even if the request is filed after the authorized period of admission has expired;
- Expedited processing of requests for advance parole documents;
- Expedited adjudication of requests for off-campus employment authorization for F-1 students experiencing severe economic hardship;
- Expedited adjudication of employment authorization applications, where appropriate;
- Assistance if applicants received a Request for Evidence or a Notice of Intent to Deny and were unable to appear for an interview, submit evidence, or respond in a timely manner because of an emergency or unforeseen circumstance; and
- Replacement of lost or damaged immigration or travel documents issued by USCIS, such as a Permanent Resident Card (Green Card).

More information on these options is available on our website at <https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/immigration-relief-in-emergencies-or-unforeseen-circumstances>.

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. The cosigners of your letter will receive a separate, identical response. Should you require any additional assistance, please have your staff contact the USCIS Office of Legislative Affairs at (240) 721-3801.

Respectfully,



Ur M. Jaddou  
Director

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<sup>5</sup> *Implementation of Employment Authorization for Individuals Covered by Deferred Enforced Departure for Lebanon*, 89 FR 83901 (Oct. 18, 2024).