



# STATE OF MINNESOTA

## Office of Governor Mark Dayton

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155

March 27, 2018

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

I write to urge you to reconsider your decision to terminate Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) for Liberian Americans, reinstate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for immigrants in our communities, and find a permanent pathway to citizenship for “Dreamers,” many of whom have lived in and contributed to the United States for most of their lives.

Given your recent decision, on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019, thousands of Liberian Americans could be removed from the United States if DED is not renewed. I ask that you reconsider this decision to terminate the program. Many Liberian DED holders have been in the United States for over 30 years and have built families and careers in our country. They are part of the social fabric of Minnesota; they are our neighbors, colleagues, and friends.

In 1989, a devastating civil war began in Liberia which ravaged that country for seven years, and displaced millions. Liberia is still recovering from that conflict, and so are its people. Many fled to find new lives for themselves and their families – including thousands who settled here in the United States. Minnesotans welcomed Liberian refugees with open arms, and today our state is home to the largest community of Liberian Americans of any state in the nation.

We are proud of our Liberian neighbors, and grateful for their many contributions to our communities, our culture, and our economy. A large number of Liberian Americans work in Minnesota’s health care industry – providing quality, skilled care to many sick, elderly, and other vulnerable people. Our health care industry has come to depend upon their hard work and skilled labor. If these workers are forced to leave our country, their absence would cause a workforce crisis in Minnesota’s health care industry.

Thousands of other Minnesota immigrants are on TPS, having fled armed conflicts, natural disasters, or other hardships in their home countries. Their lives and livelihoods depend upon the protections and security of TPS. I strongly urge you to reconsider your decision to end TPS for Haitians, El Salvadorians, and Nicaraguans. These communities have also built lives, careers, and have contributed significantly to the rich culture of Minnesota. They are hard-working individuals who contribute in all sectors of our economy and help our state thrive.

Finally, I strongly urge you to continue Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) protections for Minnesota "Dreamers," and work with Congress to enact a permanent path to citizenship for these Minnesotans. Minnesota is home to nearly 7,000 DACA recipients. They are valuable members of our communities who contribute greatly to the success of our economy. DACA has allowed a generation of young immigrants to pursue their dreams and build brighter futures here in Minnesota. Minnesota is better because of their presence in our communities, their contributions to our economy, and all they will contribute to our state's brighter future. Minnesota cannot afford to lose all that they contribute – their ideas, spirit, and hard work. We must find a permanent solution to ensure their continued success in our state and nation.

The business community in Minnesota, and across the United States, supports the renewal of DED, TPS, and DACA – because continuing these protections is essential to the success of our workforce, and our economy. Renewing TPS, DED, and finding a permanent pathway for Dreamers is good for our businesses, good for our communities, and essential for our better future. More than that, it is the right thing to do for many thousands of Minnesotans who have experienced great hardships, have persevered, and who work hard every day to contribute to the fabric of our state and create better lives for their families.

These are hard-working individuals and families whose lives and futures are hanging in the balance. They are not political chips to be bargained with. They are our friends. They are Minnesotans. They are Americans. I urge you now to act with all urgency to protect these individuals from deportation, and secure for them the same privileges of citizenship that so many previous generations of immigrants have rightly enjoyed.

We are, as many have observed, a nation of immigrants – all born from other shores, all sharing the same dreams for ourselves and our families, and all seeking the same unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We must act now to fulfill the promises enshrined in our Constitution, and secure a still brighter future for our nation, and all of its people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Dayton", written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark Dayton  
Governor