Run for your Life: TPS for Venezuela

By Jonathan T Helton

***Resolved:* *The United States federal government should substantially reduce its restrictions on legal immigration to the United States.***

Summary: This case gives Temporary Protected Status to Venezuelan immigrants. The country is facing massive economic, political, and social crises. Large numbers of refugees are leaving the country. Some are spilling into and overwhelming neighboring Latin American nations, others fleeing to the United States. But President Trump is deporting Venezuelans from the U.S. Sending them back to their country condemns them to starvation and oppression. Leaving them as refugees in neighboring countries exposes them to crime and trafficking. Keeping them here allows them to flourish and reduces the harms.

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I’M RUNNING FOR MY LIFE

Venezuela has been in a massive economic and political crisis for some time. Their socialist regime is oppressing citizens and violence is widespread. The U.S. can protect Venezuelan immigrants from this threat, so please join us as we affirm that: The United States federal government should substantially reduce its restrictions on legal immigration to the United States.

OBSERVATION 1. DEFINITIONS

Temporary Protected Status, or TPS

It's a temporary authorization for immigrants whose home countries are in crisis

NEW YORK TIMES 2018 (journalist Miriam Jordan) 18 Jan 2018 "Trump Administration Says That Nearly 200,000 Salvadorans Must Leave" <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/08/us/salvadorans-tps-end.html>

It provides temporary lawful status and work authorization to people already in the United States, whether they entered legally or not, from countries affected by armed conflict, natural disaster or other strife. The homeland security secretary decides when a country merits the designation and can renew it for six, 12 or 18 months. There is no limit to the number of extensions a country can receive. Countries that have received and then lost the designation in the past include Bosnia and Herzegovina, which endured a civil war in the 1990s, and Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia during the Ebola crisis.

S.3759 Venezuela TPS Act of 2018

Congress.gov no date (official website for federal legislative information from Congress) “S.3759 - Venezuela TPS Act of 2018” https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/3759

This bill addresses the migration of Venezuelan nationals by permitting them to qualify for temporary protected status, which prevents their removal from the United States and allows them to obtain employment and travel authorization. The bill also provides assistance to the migration systems of nations surrounding Venezuela.

OBSERVATION 2. INHERENCY.

FACT 1. Venezuela in crisis.

Prof. Marco Aponte-Moreno 2018 (Assistant Professor of Global Business at St Mary's College of California) 18 October 2018 “Trump sees opportunity in Venezuela’s humanitarian crisis as midterms approach” https://theconversation.com/trump-sees-opportunity-in-venezuelas-humanitarian-crisis-as-midterms-approach-104047

A combination of remarkable incompetence, misguided ideology, and systemic corruption have reduced a once prosperous and resilient democracy to a wellspring of suffering and the source of one of the largest mass migrations ever in the Western Hemisphere. More than two decades of expropriations and state takeover of the economy has led to economic collapse. The International Monetary Fund projects that the Venezuelan economy will contract by 18 percent in 2018 under the weight of 1,370,000 percent inflation and with the prospect of 10,000,000 percent inflation in 2019. Despite having the largest proven oil reserves in the world, mismanagement has led oil production—the heart of Venezuela’s economy—to plummet. Today, Venezuela is producing approximately 1.4 million barrels of oil per day, compared with a production peak of nearly 3.5 million barrels per day in 1998. The energy sector is so decimated that the country now faces regular, widespread power outages.

FACT 2. Refugees fleeing

Prof. Marco Aponte-Moreno 2018 (Assistant Professor of Global Business at St Mary's College of California) 18 October 2018 “Trump sees opportunity in Venezuela’s humanitarian crisis as midterms approach” https://theconversation.com/trump-sees-opportunity-in-venezuelas-humanitarian-crisis-as-midterms-approach-104047

As conditions in Venezuela worsen, a massive and growing number of people are fleeing to neighboring nations. The UN High Commission on Refugees estimates that 5,000 people leave every day.

FACT 3. Deportations. Trump is deporting endangered Venezuelans

A. Conflicting rhetoric

Franco Ordonez 2018 (White House correspondent for the McClatchy Washington Bureau; previously covered Latin American affairs for the Miami Herald and El Nuevo Herald) 24 April 2018 “Trump administration deports Venezuelans while pledging aid” https://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/world/article209726344.html

Despite promising millions of dollars to help fleeing Venezuelans and exhorting allies in the region to["do more"](http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/politics-government/white-house/article208906939.html)about the starvation and oppression of the Venezuelan people, the Trump administration has been quietly deporting Venezuelans who came to the United States illegally or overstayed visas out of fear of going home.

B. 35% increase in deportation

Catherine Shoichet 2019 (senior writer covering immigration for CNN Digital. Her in-depth reporting has earned awards from the Society for Features Journalism and the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. In 2017, she was a finalist for a Livingston Award for excellence in national reporting.) 20 February 2019 “Trump is sending humanitarian aid to Venezuela. Venezuelans in the US say they need help, too” https://www.cnn.com/2019/02/16/us/venezuelans-asylum/index.html

Immigration and Customs Enforcement deported 336 people to Venezuela last year, a 35% increase over the previous year. But that's far below the tens of thousands deported to Mexico, Guatemala and other Latin American countries

FACT 4. Legal immigration blocked, but TPS could solve.

Kemil A. Saab 2018 (Articles Editor and a J.D. Candidate at St. Thomas Univ School of Law.) May 2018 “Leaving “Home”: TPS for Venezuela?” http://stthomaslawreview.org/2018/04/07/leaving-home-tps-for-venezuela/

As a result, hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans have been forced to emigrate, leaving their families, professions, and homes behind.  Unfortunately, when people leave Venezuela, it does not mean they are leaving their problems behind. Venezuelan immigrants are facing another problem; where to go?  Thousands have come to the U.S. trying to escape from the mounting violence, food shortage, and political persecution; around thirty Venezuelan families are arriving weekly.  The majority are entering under their tourist visas, which allows them to stay here for six months without working. Other means to remain here legally are very expensive.  Meanwhile, others do not qualify for the available visas, leaving asylum or illegality as their only options.  Still, asylum does not guarantee Venezuelans a protected status in the U.S., making them subject to deportation.  Nonetheless, a possible solution could be the designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status (“[TPS](https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status)”).

OBSERVATION 3. The Plan, implemented by Congress and the President

1. Congress passes the Venezuela TPS Act of 2018

2. Plan takes effect the day after an Affirmative ballot.

3. All Affirmative speeches may clarify.

OBSERVATION 4. ADVANTAGES

Advantage 1. Rescued from death in Venezuela

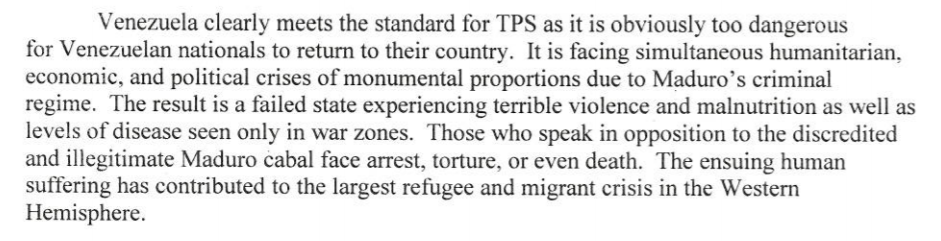
A. TPS would protect 72,000 Venezuelans from deportation

The International Rescue Committee 2019 (The International Rescue Committee responds to the world’s worst humanitarian crises, helping to restore health, safety, education, economic wellbeing, and power to people devastated by conflict and disaster. Founded in 1933 at the call of Albert Einstein, the IRC is at work in over 40 countries and 28 offices across the U.S. helping people to survive, reclaim control of their future, and strengthen their communities.) 24 February 2019 “The IRC urges the US Administration to provide Temporary Protected Status designation to Venezuela” https://www.rescue.org/press-release/irc-urges-us-administration-provide-temporary-protected-status-designation-venezuela

In response to mounting numbers of people seeking refuge out of Venezuela due to disastrous economic conditions and instability, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) calls for the US Administration to uphold its humanitarian commitments by using Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to protect an estimated 72,000 Venezuelans currently in the United States from being forcibly returned to harm.

B. TPS is the right response to the humanitarian crisis

Letter to President Trump signed by 24 Senators 2019 (7 March 2019) https://www.durbin.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/March7%20Venezuela%20TPS%20Letter%20FINAL%20SIGNED.pdf



C. Impact: Lives at stake. Health and food are denied, they are fleeing for their lives

Amnesty International 2019. (global human rights advocacy non-profit group) 10 things you need to know about Venezuela’s human rights crisis 18 Feb 2019 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/02/10-things-you-need-to-know-about-venezuelas-human-rights-crisis/>

It is estimated that more than three million people have fled Venezuela since 2015, equivalent to 10% of the population, according to UN figures. The majority have sought refuge in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Most have cited the denial of their rights to health and food as their main reason for leaving. In other words, they are fleeing for their lives.

Advantage 2. Rescued from abuse in neighboring countries

Venezuelans pouring into neighboring countries suffer squalor, trafficking and abuse

Krishnadev Calamur 2018 (journalist) 23 Sept 2018 THE ATLANTIC “Latin America Gets Its Own Migrant Crisis” <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/09/venezuela-migrants/570979/> (brackets in original)

Trish Bury, the deputy director of programs in Colombia for the International Rescue Committee, which began working in Cucuta in April, told me that her group is seeing unaccompanied minors from Venezuela at a rate four times that of other emergencies around the world. Domestic violence is common, she said, as is overcrowding, and many Venezuelans are on the streets, begging. But Bury also worried about what she couldn’t see: “The exploitation, abuse, trafficking,” as well as illegal work, and child labor. “Thousands of people are pouring across the Simon Bolivar bridge [[that leads to Cucuta from Venezuela](https://www.google.com/maps/search/simon+bolivar+bridge+colombia-venezuela+border/@7.8178761,-72.5906007,11z)] every day,” Bury said.

Advantage 3. US And Regional Security

A. Neighbors on the Brink. Latin America can’t handle the mass exodus from Venezuela

Krishnadev Calamur 2018 (journalist) 23 Sept 2018 THE ATLANTIC “Latin America Gets Its Own Migrant Crisis” <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/09/venezuela-migrants/570979/> (first brackets added; second brackets and ellipses in original)

[Colombia’s Ambassador to the U.S., Francisco] Santos, whose country of 48 million people is now home to 1 million Venezuelans, likened the situation to the European migrant crisis. “Germany received 1 million refugees from Syria in three years,” he said. “We received that in one year. … Imagine what this flow is going to do to Latin America, … [which] hasn't had those types of problems.”

B. Stability. Admitting refugees helps U.S. and regional security by reducing pressure on struggling neighbors

Matthew La Corte and Professor Idean Salehyan 2019 (Matthew La Corte is the government affairs manager for immigration policy at the Niskanen Center. He leads the immigration department’s legislative outreach efforts, focusing on DACA, work visas, and refugee resettlement. Idean Salehyan: Professor at the University of North Texas & Niskanen adjunct fellow) 20 February 2019 “CONGRESS SHOULD PUSH PRESIDENT TRUMP TO HELP VENEZUELAN REFUGEES” https://niskanencenter.org/blog/congress-should-push-president-trump-to-help-venezuelan-refugees/

As 20 senior military and foreign policy officials — including Henry Kissinger, Janet Napolitano, Leon Panetta, David Petraeus, and James Jones — wrote, “Resettlement initiatives help advance U.S. national security interests by supporting the stability of our allies and partners that are struggling to host large numbers of refugees.”

C. Violence. Violent clashes will worsen in neighboring countries if something doesn’t change

Megan Janetsky 2019 (She is a Colombia-based journalist focusing on migration, human rights, and politics) 14 January 2019 “Here’s Why Colombia Opened Its Arms to Venezuelan Migrants—Until Now” https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/01/14/heres-why-colombia-opened-its-arms-to-venezuelan-migrants-until-now/

The U.N. refugee agency is seeking $738 million to support countries including Colombia, Brazil, Peru, and Ecuador as they receive migrants, but all signs point to the situation only deteriorating further. The Venezuelan currency loses value every day, and the Maduro regime becomes increasingly isolated from world leaders, most recently as 13 foreign ministers of nations belonging to the Lima Group, which covers the Americas, said they would not [recognize](https://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/world/americas/venezuela/article223932475.html) Maduro as he began a six-year term last week. The Colombian government [estimates](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-venezuela-migration-colombia/four-million-venezuelans-may-live-in-colombia-by-2021-minister-idUSKCN1MC2NZ) that as many as 4 million Venezuelans may live in the country by 2021. If national and regional aid efforts cannot keep pace, clashes may only worsen, not just in Colombia but in countries in Latin America where violence has already been seen.

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