

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 27, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
Room S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell:

We write to ask that you allow for the consideration of legislation to extend protected status for Liberian recipients of Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) this week before the current protections expire on March 31, 2019. We ask that you take this action immediately in order to avoid further uncertainty within our Liberian-American communities—including our constituents in Minnesota.

Liberians have had protected status in the United States since President George H.W. Bush first approved Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Liberia in response to its civil war in 1991. That status was extended under presidents from both parties until it expired in 2007, at which time President George W. Bush granted DED protections to Liberians. Since 2007, DED has been extended by subsequent administrations, allowing recipients to remain in the United States legally and receive work authorization.

Our state of Minnesota has one of the largest Liberian populations in the country. Many of these people have been in our state for decades, and they are an important part of our communities, where they serve as business owners, teachers, and health care workers. They have worked hard, played by the rules, and submitted to rigorous vetting. Uprooting them now would be cruel and harmful to them, their families, their neighbors, and their employers.

We continue to urge the President to take action to extend these protections. We also respectfully and urgently request that you allow the Senate to consider legislation to extend these protections before they expire.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of this issue.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator