

RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT DESIGNATION OF TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS FOR GUATEMALANS

WHEREAS, the City of Durham is committed to and maintains a long history of supporting, celebrating, and empowering immigrants and refugees, many of whom are escaping war and natural disasters, regardless of their immigration status, and

WHEREAS, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) was created by Congress in 1990 as a form of immigration status and an administrative authority used by the executive branch that provides employment authorization and protection from deportation for foreign nationals who cannot safely return to their home countries, and

WHEREAS, since 1991, the United States has granted TPS to foreign nationals from Afghanistan, Burma, Cameroon, El Salvador, Honduras, Haiti, Nepal, Nicaragua, Syria, Sudan, Somalia, South Sudan, Yemen, Venezuela, and Ukraine, and it has renewed their protected status every 18 months since then. Guatemala has not previously been designated for TPS, and

WHEREAS, Guatemalans are the sixth largest Hispanic group in the United States and the second largest Central American population after Salvadorans. Guatemalans are vulnerable to deportation, severing familial relationships and possibly damaging our country's economic strength. North Carolina is home to more than 18,000 Guatemalans, and

WHEREAS, it remains unsafe for Guatemalans to return to their country because of the ongoing damage and recovery of the 2020 hurricanes, gender-based violence, organized crime, discrimination and displacement among black and indigenous Guatemalans, and

WHEREAS, in light of the increase of anti-immigrant enforcement in the United States such as the Asylum Ban, family detention, 287(g) agreements, and that there remains no hope for legislation in Congress to provide permanent protections to migrants lacking an immigration status, TPS is the only hope on the horizon to protect Guatemalans, and

WHEREAS, the City of Durham recognizes the overwhelmingly positive contribution that TPS holders have on our economy, social fabric, diversity, and the well-being of our community, and

WHEREAS, TPS holders have significantly high levels of labor force participation: 94% of men and 82.1% of women are working, with 83.3% of men and 54.9% of women working more than 40 hours per week.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Durham City Council urges the Executive Office of the President of the United States to act immediately to designate TPS for Guatemala, and calls on the Department of Homeland Security to grant a TPS designation for Guatemalans currently residing in the United States, a program that provides support to people fleeing uncertainty, natural disasters, and violence.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be sent to the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, the Secretary of the Department of State, the Office of the Vice President of the United States, the Executive Office of the President, the leaders of both the Democratic and Republican party of the United States House of Representatives and of the United States Senate, and the Office of the Attorney General.