

Moved by the pain of inequities among peoples and environmental degradation, the Ohio Sisters Justice Network collaborates across the state to strengthen the moral voice as we advocate and act for a just and peaceful Earth community.



**A Call for Justice for Our Haitian Brothers and Sisters:
An Ohio Sisters Justice Network Statement on Temporary Protected Status
and Immigration Reform
July 17, 2026**

Members of the Ohio Sisters Justice Network (OSJN) deeply grieve and disagree with imminent plans to deport our Haitian brothers and sisters. We join the Ohio Catholic bishops in calling this a moral failure, affirming their statement: *"We find no moral justification for terminating their Temporary Protected Status (TPS) without an alternative way to adjust their immigration status."*¹

Haitian families fled unimaginable violence, followed United States law, and were granted Temporary Protected Status because returning home would have placed their lives in danger. Tragically, that violence has only intensified and become even more lethal. It is a matter of life and death. It's not just surviving daily life, it's surviving life itself. Armed gangs terrorize communities, children are kidnapped for ransom or forced into gang activity, and families live in constant fear. The U.S. Department of State continues to advise against all travel to Haiti because of life-threatening conditions, and commercial flights remain severely restricted because of the threat of armed attacks. Haiti is not safe.

When Congress created Temporary Protected Status in 1990, it intended to provide refuge until conditions in a person's homeland improved enough to allow a safe return. Those conditions simply do not exist today. Ending TPS now contradicts the very purpose of the law and places thousands of lives at risk. We stand in solidarity with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) as Bishop John Cahill, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Migration, affirms: *"There is simply no realistic opportunity for the safe and orderly return of people to Haiti at this time."*²

The ministries of Catholic vowed religious women and our collaborators have placed us beside immigrants and refugees for generations. We have welcomed families in schools, hospitals, shelters, parishes, detention ministries, and neighborhoods. This commitment is reflected in the Leadership Conference of Women Religious' (LCWR) Declaration of Commitment, which affirms: *"Welcoming immigrants and providing care and assistance to all who reside in our nation, while advocating for comprehensive immigration reform."*³ Through these relationships, we have learned that immigration is not an abstract political issue. It is about real people, real families, and the God-given dignity of every human person. We know Haitian families not as statistics or political talking points, but as our neighbors, coworkers, employees, fellow parishioners, and friends.



Across Ohio, Haitian families have become part of the fabric of our communities. They worship with us, their children attend our schools, and they contribute every day to the common good. They have followed our laws, obtained work authorization, paid taxes, rented homes, purchased cars, opened businesses, and filled essential roles as nurses, home health aides, factory workers, caregivers, and other valued employees. Many have established families here, and countless children born to these families are United States citizens.

Deporting these families would inflict profound harm. Parents could be forced to choose between separation from their children or taking them into a nation gripped by violence. Family separation also leaves vulnerable children at increased risk of exploitation and human trafficking. Ohio communities would lose trusted workers, employers would struggle to fill essential positions, and neighborhoods would be diminished by the loss of faithful, hardworking families who have enriched our communities through their culture, perseverance, and generosity.

We recognize that Temporary Protected Status was never intended to be permanent. At the same time, justice requires more than simply ending legal protection when safe return remains impossible. People who have followed the law, contributed to the common good, and demonstrated their commitment to their communities deserve an opportunity to remain legally in the country they now call home.

We affirm our nation's right and responsibility to maintain secure borders and an orderly immigration system. We also believe our nation has a moral responsibility to provide fair, timely, and humane legal pathways for those fleeing violence and persecution. We therefore call upon our elected leaders to extend Temporary Protected Status for Haitians and to enact comprehensive immigration reform that provides a pathway to lawful permanent residence for long-term TPS holders.

Sister Carren Herring, RSM, a founding member of the Ohio Sisters Justice Network, beautifully expresses our commitment. *"To our Haitian brothers and sisters: know that you are not alone. We see your courage, your faith, your hard work, and your love for your families. We are grateful for your presence among us and for the many ways you have enriched our communities. We will continue to stand beside you, raise our voices with yours, and advocate for policies that recognize your dignity and protect your families."*

As people of faith, we pray that our nation will choose compassion over fear, justice over expediency, and human dignity over political convenience. We pray that Our Lady of Perpetual Help protect every family living in uncertainty, guide our nation's leaders with wisdom and courage, and help us build a society where every person is welcomed as a beloved child of God.

References:

¹ Ohio Catholic Conference Statement: [America at 250: Freedom and the Common Good](#)

² [Statement](#) by Bishop John Cahill, Chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Migration

Ohio Sisters Justice Network (OSJN) is a coalition of vowed members, justice promoters and other charism carriers of Catholic women religious congregations across Ohio. We join with partner organizations locally and nationally working for justice.