

his wife, Donna, and his daughters, Tammy and Traci, was also instrumental in him achieving such a successful career.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing Clark Thomas for his long tenure of service to the citizens of the State of Missouri, and in thanking him for being an outstanding public servant. I wish him all the best in his retirement.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIRGINIA HOSPITAL & HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATION

**HON. JENNIFER L. McCLELLAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 4, 2026*

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA), a century of partnership, leadership, and dedicated service to improving health and health care for all Virginians.

Since its founding in 1926 as a trade association of Virginia hospitals, VHHA has grown into a statewide leader, representing 26 member-health systems and 117 community, specialty, and psychiatric hospitals that deliver comprehensive care to individuals and families across our Commonwealth.

For the past 100 years, VHHA has worked collaboratively with hospitals, health systems, policymakers, and community partners to ensure the sustainability of Virginia's health care system, to transform care delivery, and to advance public health and health equity. At the heart of its mission is the vision of making Virginia the healthiest state in the Nation by driving policies and programs to improve quality, expand access, and promote patient-centered care.

Founded in 1926, VHHA has spent the past 100 years supporting the essential work of Virginia's hospitals and health systems to protect health, enhance access to care, and strengthen our economy. Today, VHHA represents 26 health systems and 117 acute care, children's, psychiatric, long-term care, rehabilitation, and specialty hospitals serving communities throughout Virginia.

For a century, VHHA has worked in close partnership with policymakers, health care leaders, and community stakeholders to advance high-quality, patient-centered care and to ensure the long-term sustainability of Virginia's health care system. Guided by its mission to improve the health of Virginians and its vision of making Virginia the healthiest state in the Nation, VHHA has played a central role in shaping health policy, supporting innovation, and responding to the evolving needs of patients and providers alike.

Virginia hospitals contribute \$4.5 billion annually in community support and generate \$68.8 billion in positive economic activity statewide. They directly employ more than 138,000 Virginians, provide over \$13 billion in annual payroll, and serve as anchor institutions in cities and rural communities across the Commonwealth.

Each year, VHHA member hospitals accommodate more than 4.45 million patient days, deliver over 86,000 babies, and handle 92 percent of all voluntary and involuntary inpa-

tient behavioral health admissions in Virginia. These figures reflect not only the scale of care provided but also the critical role hospitals play in meeting urgent health needs, supporting families, and responding to public health and behavioral health challenges.

Throughout 2026, VHHA is honoring this remarkable centennial with events that recognize its past achievements and look forward to the future of health care in Virginia. As we confront ongoing challenges, from rising demand for health care services to workforce shortages and health disparities, VHHA's century of experience and commitment to innovation remains invaluable. I commend the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association, its members, and its leadership for their steadfast dedication to improving the health and well-being of all Virginians.

HONORING THE CREW OF THE FISHING VESSEL LILY JEAN

**HON. SETH MOULTON**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 4, 2026*

Mr. MOULTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and in somber recognition of the seven courageous members of the *Lily Jean*, who were lost at sea when the 72-foot groundfish trawler sank in the frigid waters off Gloucester, Massachusetts, last Friday.

For more than 400 years, Gloucester fishermen have braved the Atlantic to feed our Nation. Fishing is not just an industry in Gloucester; it is the backbone of the community, woven into families, neighborhoods, and generations through shared sacrifice.

Today, the Gloucester community and the entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts mourn the loss of Captain Accursio "Gus" Sanfilippo, his crew, and an NOAA observer. In a town where everyone knows someone who fishes, a tragedy like this is felt in every home, on every dock, and along every wharf.

Captain Sanfilippo was a fifth-generation commercial fisherman, a veteran of the sea, and a mentor to young fishermen just starting out. He took countless aspiring fishermen under his wing, sharing not just his knowledge, but his love for the water and the traditions of the trade.

Deckhands Paul Beal, Sr., and Jr. also understood that fishing is not simply a job, but a calling passed down through generations. Paul, Sr. began fishing while still in high school and shared that passion with his son, working side by side on the water.

We also remember crew members John Paul Rousanidis, Sean Therrien, and Freeman Short, men lauded for their hard work, commitment to family, and generosity to others. Finally, we honor Jada Sammitt, a recent college graduate serving as an NOAA federal observer, who chose public service and scientific stewardship as her calling.

While the *Lily Jean's* dedicated crew could not be saved, we owe our deepest gratitude to the U.S. Coast Guard for their relentless efforts, searching more than 1,000 square miles using aircraft, cutters, and small boats. Their sense of duty is profound, and we know they too carry the weight of this tremendous loss.

While nothing can bring Captain Gus and the crew of the *Lily Jean* back to their families

and communities, we owe it to them, and to every fisherman who heads out before dawn, to ensure that this vital and dangerous work is respected, valued, and supported.

Fishing is not just an occupation. It is a way of life, built on hard work, risk, and an enduring love for the sea. Fishermen often say they have salt in their blood. The love we have for our Gloucester fishermen runs deep in our hearts too.

My thoughts and prayers are with the families and loved ones of the crew of the *Lily Jean*, and we stand with the entire Gloucester community as they grieve this loss during this heartbreaking time.

EXPERT TESTIMONY DURING THE CONGRESSIONAL FIELD HEARING ON HAITIAN TPS TERMINATION

**HON. AYANNA PRESSLEY**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 4, 2026*

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, as part of the Congressional Field Hearing on Haitian TPS Termination held in the Massachusetts 7th Congressional District, experts from the community were invited to discuss the importance of extending TPS for Haitian nationals. Therefore, I include in the RECORD their testimonies:

TESTIMONY OF ATTORNEY MIRIAN ALBERT OF LAWYERS FOR CIVIL RIGHTS TO THE CONGRESSIONAL FIELD HEARING ON THE TERMINATION OF HAITIAN TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS

Lawyers for Civil Rights ("LCR") advocates for communities of color and immigrants through legal action, education, and economic empowerment. On March 3, 2025, LCR filed a federal lawsuit to block the termination of Temporary Protected Status ("TPS") for Haitian and Venezuelan immigrants. The lawsuit was brought on behalf of three immigrant advocacy organizations—Haitians Americans United, Inc. ("HAU"), Venezuelan Association of Massachusetts ("VAM"), UndocuBlack Network ("UBN")—and four individual TPS holders. Today, LCR urges Congress to act to preserve humane immigration protections like TPS. Without those protections, the consequences will be severe, forcing families into crisis, undermining local economies, and pushing communities into unnecessary instability.

TPS for Haiti was first designated in 2010, after a catastrophic earthquake. Extensions continued over many years in recognition of Haiti's ongoing instability and humanitarian needs. The designation was most recently extended through February 3, 2026, under a Biden-era decision, reflecting the reality that the conditions prompting the original designation have not meaningfully improved. In February 2025, the Trump Administration attempted to shorten that designation through a "partial vacatur," purporting to cut the TPS period by six months. A federal court ruled the action unlawful and restored the February 3, 2026 expiration date. Despite this ruling, in late 2025, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced it would not renew Haiti's TPS designation beyond that date.

LCR strongly condemned this decision. Terminating TPS amid Haiti's ongoing crisis—including widespread gang violence, political instability, and economic collapse—ignores conditions that even the U.S. State Department continues to warn make travel unsafe. The consequences of this decision are

not abstract or speculative; they are immediate and deeply human. If allowed to proceed, the termination of Haitian TPS on February 3, 2026 would impose immediate and serious harms.

First, TPS holders would lose protection from deportation absent another lawful status resulting in the sudden destruction of countless lives and the separation of families. Many Haitian TPS recipients have lived in the United States for over a decade, have U.S. citizen children, contribute to the economy, own homes, and have built stable lives rooted in their communities. Termination would suddenly expose over 300,000 Haitian TPS holders to removal proceedings, upending families and lives.

Second, work authorization tied to TPS would expire creating a severe gap in the economy. Haitian TPS holders comprise a large portion of essential work in healthcare, education, and other critical sectors. The loss of their labor would harm not only individual families, but also employers, local economies, and public services that rely on their contributions.

In light of these realities, LCR urges Congress to take the following actions:

Pursue a Pathway to Permanent Residency for TPS Holders. While politically challenging, abandoning long-term TPS holders to indefinite legal limbo, or forcing them into undocumented status, is neither humane nor rational immigration policy.

Invest in U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' capacity, access, and fairness. Congress should fund and mandate meaningful improvements at USCIS to reduce adjudication backlogs, expand language access, and ensure TPS holders can realistically pursue alternative forms of relief.

Increase Funding for Legal Services and Community-Based Organizations. Congress should increase funding for legal services providers and trusted community-based organizations that assist TPS holders with transition planning, applications for relief, and know-your-rights education. Access to legal counsel is often the difference between stability and removal.

Terminating Haitian TPS without a humane and legally sound alternative compounds existing injustices and jeopardizes the well-being of families and communities across the United States. We must choose policies rooted in justice, grounded in law, and reflective of this Nation's fundamental values.

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:** This testimony is submitted anonymously on behalf of a Massachusetts-based, community-rooted mental health organization that primarily serves Haitian individuals and families, many of whom hold TPS. To protect the safety, dignity, and privacy of our clients, staff and community partners, no identifying information is included. Our mission has been to destigmatize and normalize conversations around mental health within the Haitian community, a community that has long been taught to endure suffering in silence, to "be strong," and to survive without support. For many of our clients, seeking mental health care represents a cultural and emotional rupture: the first time they have allowed themselves to name fear, grief, trauma, and exhaustion out loud. We have worked intentionally to build trust with Haitian families, often in their own language, often through community relationships, and always with deep respect for history, culture, and faith. Over time, we have watched individuals begin to heal. Parents who survived political violence, natural disasters, and forced migration finally started to feel grounded. Families began to imagine stability. Children began to feel safer because

their caregivers felt safer. The current administration's actions surrounding TPS are now reopening wounds that never fully healed.

The possibility of TPS being taken away has had a devastating emotional impact on our Haitian clients. Many are survivors of profound trauma, political persecution, gang violence, the 2010 earthquake, repeated displacement, and systemic racism both abroad and in the United States. TPS has been one of the few stabilizing forces in their lives. The threat of its removal has triggered intense fear, panic, despair, and retraumatization. We are seeing clients unravel emotionally. Individuals who had made progress in therapy are now regressing under the weight of uncertainty. Parents express terror at the thought of losing work authorization and the ability to provide for their children. Many fear being forced to return to a country that remains unsafe and unstable. Others carry the unbearable guilt of potentially uprooting U.S.-born children or leaving them behind. For the Haitian community, this fear is not hypothetical. Haiti's ongoing political collapse, gang violence, kidnappings, and humanitarian crisis are part of our clients' lived reality. The idea of return is not a policy debate, it is a threat to life, safety, and psychological survival.

If TPS is terminated, the emotional consequences will be severe and long-lasting. It will undo years of trust-building, reinforce stigma around seeking help, and send a devastating message to Haitian communities that safety and healing are conditional and disposable. The mental health impact will reverberate through families, schools, churches, and workplaces.

From our clinical and community perspective, ending TPS for Haitians is not only destabilizing, it is inhumane. It punishes resilience, undermines recovery, and disregards the deep trauma history carried by this population.

We urge decision-makers to consider the profound emotional harm TPS termination will cause to Haitian individuals, families, and communities. Preserving TPS is essential to protecting not only legal status, but mental health, dignity, and human life.

Respectfully submitted,  
Massachusetts-based Haitian Community Mental Health Organization (on behalf of Haitian clients and families).

My name is Rebecca Henry. I have been living in the United States since February 2010, following the devastating earthquake that killed so many people in Haiti. Before leaving, I lived under constant fear and stress. Gangs attempted to kidnap me multiple times, and I nearly lost my life due to political violence and instability.

Coming to the United States was the best thing that could have happened to me. I am a mother of two children—one born in Haiti and one born here in the U.S. As soon as I was able, I enrolled in school to learn English and began working to support my family.

I am a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), and I care for my patients with great joy, pride, and dedication. My patients love me deeply, and every day they look forward to seeing me and receiving my care. This work is not just a job—it is my calling.

I have lived here peacefully, attending church, participating in community activities, and raising my children responsibly. Through hard work and sacrifice, I was able to purchase a home and a car so I could care for my family and fulfill my responsibilities.

Since this past summer, however, I have begun experiencing severe anxiety and panic attacks. I am increasingly fearful and reluctant to leave my home. I constantly worry

about losing my house and being unable to drive or work because my driver's license and work permit are at risk of expiring.

I am overwhelmed by the thought of not being able to work. I have many bills to pay and two children who depend on me. I respectfully pray that those in authority will take our situation into consideration.

I cannot return to Haiti, and I have no other place to go. Please help!

My name is Xian Mao and I am a resident of Methuen, Massachusetts, Ward 0 Precinct 3. I am a family medicine physician who cares for many Haitian patients in Lawrence, Massachusetts. I believe rescinding the TPS would lead to significant barriers for my patients to accessing healthcare. Many of my patients have withstood remarkable obstacles to start their lives in this state, some without any support from their family or community. My mission as a doctor is to ensure all my patients receive the best care possible, and added stress from their immigration status being rescinded would lead to worse outcomes in an already vulnerable population.

HONORING THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE TED SMALLWOOD STORE

**HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 4, 2026*

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Ted Smallwood Store, a singular and enduring landmark of our Florida Everglades, in recognition of its centennial anniversary.

Flanked by mangroves among the Ten Thousand Islands and perched south of the southernmost city in Collier County, the Ted Smallwood Store overlooks Chokoloskee Bay as it has for generations. Originally constructed in 1906 by C.S. "Ted" Smallwood as a trading outpost and post office on Chokoloskee Island, the store served a remote community that lacked road access until 1956. For decades, it was accessible only by water, standing as a vital hub of commerce, communication, and connection in a rugged and isolated landscape.

In 1924, recognizing the mounting threat posed by storm surge and rising waters, Ted Smallwood made a visionary and ultimately life-saving decision: He undertook a major renovation to elevate the structure, completing the project in January 1926 by lifting the store's floor approximately seven feet above ground level. That feat of engineering—remarkable for its time—has preserved the building for a full century, allowing it to withstand at least seven hurricanes, including Hurricanes Donna in 1960 and Irma in 2017, both of which delivered record water levels to the site.

Historically, the Ted Smallwood Store had long stood as an outpost of Florida's last frontier. It functioned as a multicultural center where members of the Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes traded alligator hides, pottery, and thorn bird feathers for coffee, flour, cloth, and other essential goods. Boats met wagons, cultures engaged in commerce, and the store became a crossroads for people and stories.

The store's survival is owed not only to its elevation, but also to the intentional care taken