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New Lawsuit Challenges Trump Administration's Termination of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Somalia

Somali immigrants and advocacy organizations file a federal lawsuit to preserve protections for thousands facing unlawful deportation to a country gripped by armed conflict and a devastating humanitarian crisis.

(Boston, M.A.) – Today, African Communities Together (ACT), Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans (PANA), three Somali Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders, and one Somali TPS applicant [filed a federal lawsuit](#) in the District of Massachusetts challenging the Trump administration's flawed periodic review and resulting termination of TPS for Somalia. TPS is a congressionally authorized, humanitarian program that protects eligible individuals from immigration detention and forcible return to countries designated as unsafe because of dire conditions such as armed conflict, natural disaster, or other extraordinary circumstances. The lawsuit seeks postponement of the March 17, 2026, effective date of the termination, which threatens thousands of Somalis and their families who have built lives in the United States while their home country continues to face unsafe conditions, including devastating armed conflict, widespread displacement, and an acute humanitarian crisis.

If their protections are unlawfully and imminently stripped away, Somali TPS holders face loss of immigration status and work authorization, deportation proceedings and related immigration confinement, forced family separation, and removal to a country where conditions remain deeply unsafe. The plaintiffs are represented by **Muslim Advocates (MA)**, **Haitian Bridge Alliance (HBA)**, and **the Legal Defense Fund (LDF)**, in a lawsuit supported by **Communities United for Status & Protection (CUSP)**.

The lawsuit challenges a government review of Somalia's TPS designation, infected by procedural deficiencies and driven by a preordained and discriminatory agenda to end TPS for Somalia and other non-white and non-European countries. The plaintiffs seek postponement of the resulting termination decision to prevent irreparable harm to Somali community members. For years, the U.S. government has designated and redesignated Somalia for TPS in recognition of conditions—including active armed conflict, the threat of the paramilitary group Al-Shabaab, widespread displacement, climate extremes, and severe food insecurity—that persist today and make return unsafe. Coinciding with the termination of Somalia's TPS, President Trump has targeted the Somali community in Minnesota, smearing Somalis as "garbage," "low I.Q.," "pirates," he wants out of this country.

This termination is part of the Trump administration's broader campaign to strip TPS from communities from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Latin America—including South Sudan, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Haiti,



Honduras, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Nepal, Burma, Afghanistan, Syria, and Yemen—while making it easier for white Afrikaners from South Africa to enter the United States as refugees. That pattern reveals immigration policy driven by racial and national origin discrimination, not objective assessments of country conditions or adherence to the law.

“Somali community members have built deep roots here—raising families, working, contributing to their communities—while their home country has remained in crisis for decades,” **said Amaha Kassa, Executive Director of African Communities Together (ACT)**. “Forcing them back now, to a country where armed conflict and famine are ongoing realities, is not a policy decision—it is a cruelty. The government had a legal obligation to conduct the statutorily required periodic review process for Somalia. It failed that obligation, and we are in court to say so.”

“The harm from this termination is not abstract—we are already living it. Somali families in our communities fear their loved ones will be picked up and disappeared to a third country like Uganda, are skipping medical appointments, and are afraid to leave their homes. The administration has created a climate of terror before a single deportation order is issued. PANA has stood with the Somali community for years, and we will not stop now. What is happening to this community is an injustice, and we intend to fight it as such,” **said Ramla Sahid, Executive Director at the Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans (PANA)**.

“Every one of these terminations is a test—a test of whether communities will fight back, and whether the courts will hold the line on the rule of law,” **said Carolyn Tran, Executive Director of Communities United for Status & Protection (CUSP)**. “CUSP was built to make sure no community faces these attacks alone. The Somali community is not fighting in isolation—they are standing alongside South Sudanese, Ethiopian, Haitian, Cameroonian, and Nepali TPS holders, and so many others who have refused to be erased. That collective resistance is what this administration did not count on, and it is what will sustain us.”

“In practice, this termination means more children could be separated from their parents, spouses torn from partners, and people who have known no other home for years being forcibly sent into a known humanitarian crisis and life-threatening danger,” **said Erik Crew, Staff Attorney at Haitian Bridge Alliance (HBA)**. “Somali TPS holders, and all people who this nation has promised status and protection, deserve a government that applies the law faithfully and treats their safety as the serious statutory, constitutional, and human rights matter that it is. Instead, this administration has made them a target alongside so many Black immigrant communities. We will not let that stand.”

“The termination of TPS for Somalia is racism masking as immigration policy. The administration cannot point to a legally sufficient country conditions review for Somalia—or for the many other communities it has targeted—to sustain the termination. The harm this decision would unleash is real: it threatens to tear parents away from children, destabilize households, and force families back into danger. TPS was designed to shield communities



from precisely this kind of cruel fate. Stripping it away en masse—and on the basis of race—is shameful, inflicting chaos and fear where Congress intended stability and safety,” **said Omar Farah, Executive Director at Muslim Advocates (MA).**

“Anti-Black racism has always shaped who this country decides belongs and who it targets for removal. The termination of TPS for Somalia—following terminations for Haiti, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Cameroon—is not a coincidence. It follows a wave of the Trump administration’s offensive and discriminatory statements, policies, and enforcement actions aimed at Black immigrants and rooted in anti-Black bias. Today, we are proud to support the Somali community in this case and to make clear that the civil rights of Black immigrants are integral to an inclusive, multiracial democracy,” said **Janai Nelson, President and Director-Counsel at the Legal Defense Fund.**

[Communities United for Status & Protection \(CUSP\)](#) is a national collaborative of grassroots immigrant-led organizations working to win permanent status for TPS holders and build a more inclusive immigrant rights movement that centers African, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latinx, Arab/Middle Eastern, and Asian & Pacific Islander immigrants.

[African Communities Together \(ACT\)](#) is an organization of African immigrants fighting for civil rights, opportunity, and a better life for our families here in the U.S. and worldwide.

[Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans \(PANA\)](#) advocates for the full economic, social, and civic inclusion of refugees and displaced populations in the San Diego region, throughout California, and across the country.

[Muslim Advocates](#) is a social justice and legal advocacy organization that works with and for Black, African, Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, South Asian, and other historically marginalized communities to build community power, dismantle systemic discrimination, and demand shared wellbeing by using litigation, policy engagement, and communications strategies.

[Haitian Bridge Alliance \(HBA\)](#) advocates for fair and humane immigration policies and provides migrants and immigrants with humanitarian, legal, and social services, with a particular focus on Black people, the Haitian community, women and girls, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and survivors of torture and other human rights abuses.

[The Legal Defense Fund \(LDF\)](#), founded in 1940, is the nation’s first civil rights legal organization. LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957, though it was founded under the leadership of Thurgood Marshall while he was at the NAACP. LDF’s Thurgood



Marshall Institute (TMI) is a division of LDF that undertakes innovative research and houses LDF's archive. In all media attributions, please refer to us as the Legal Defense Fund or LDF (do not include NAACP) and refer to the Institute as LDF's Thurgood Marshall Institute or TMI.