



June 14, 2021

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Van Hollen:

On behalf of the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), I write to express our support for the Safe Environment from Countries Under Repression and Emergency Act (SECURE Act, S.306). We support providing a pathway to permanent residency for individuals benefitting from Temporary Protected Status (TPS) because many TPS recipients work for agencies supporting people with disabilities. Changes to the TPS program in recent years have affected the stability of supports for people with disabilities, in addition to causing much distress to TPS holders.

ANCOR is a national, nonprofit trade association representing more than 1,600 private community providers of services to people with disabilities, mostly funded by the Medicaid program. Combined, we support over one million individuals with disabilities, and work to share policy, shape solutions and strengthen the community. The Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) our members employ are on the frontlines of the pandemic, keeping people with disabilities healthy and safe in the community. They help people with disabilities find employment, perform daily hygiene, go grocery shopping, and make healthy decisions.

The SECURE Act recognizes the important contributions that TPS recipients have made to U.S. society and can continue to offer after they receive permanent residency. Within the field of disability supports, TPS recipients have played an important role helping people with disabilities live full and independent lives in their communities and participating in society. The DSP field has a significant recruitment and retention crisis, with a current average national yearly turnover rate of 42.8 percent. The ensuing vacancies have repercussions for individuals supported while further exhausting remaining staff. Decades-long attempts to recruit workers born in the United States for this rewarding but emotionally and physically challenging profession have not been successful, so the stability in services provided by DSPs who are TPS recipients has been important to the well-being of people with disabilities.

We are grateful for your work to provide stability and security for TPS recipients, and by extension the broader community which relies on them. If you have more questions on the DSP workforce or other disability topics, please feel free to reach out to me at smeek@ancor.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Meek".

Sarah Meek
Senior Director of Legislative Affairs

Cc: Senate Judiciary Chair Durbin
Senate Judiciary Ranking Member Grassley
Sen. Feinstein
Sen. Cardin

Sen. Schumer
Sen. Schatz
Sen. Blumenthal
Sen. Markey
Sen. Cortez Masto
Sen. Smith
Sen. Gillibrand
Sen. Warren
Sen. Rosen
Sen. Warner
Sen. Padilla
Sen. Sanders
Sen. Wyden
Sen. Whitehouse
Sen. Kaine
Sen. Murray
Sen. Booker
Sen. Duckworth
Sen. Coons
Sen. Klobuchar