



DEFERRED ENFORCED DEPARTURE: LIBERIA FACT SHEET

The Roots of Unrest and Crisis

After an intense civil war, Liberian immigrants gained relief from deportation. Temporary Protected Status for Liberia, signed under George H.W. Bush kept Liberian immigrants from being deported for 18 months.¹ Immigration relief came after Liberia's early years as a colony of the United States, and after deep western intervention² contributed to instability.³ What was termed the 'First Liberian Civil War,'⁴ was the result of extended political unrest, characterized by coups and violence⁵. This led to hundreds of thousands of deaths in a country of only a few million people.



After this turmoil was created and resulted in the displacement of many, Temporary Protected Status was given to Liberia by President Bush and renewed by President Clinton through 1999 as unrest continued.⁶ TPS was then ended in 2007 by President George W. Bush who created Deferred Enforced Departure (DED). Under this program 4,000 Liberian immigrants have been able to build families and strengthen neighborhoods across the United States. Ebola, starting 2014 in nearby Guinea, claimed the lives of 11,000 Liberians by 2016.⁷ Behind the ebola outbreak were the structural adjustment programs of the early 1960s,⁸ that prevented Liberia from building the sort of public health infrastructure that would prevent such an outbreak.⁹ The world's 8th poorest country, Liberia had only 50 doctors to maintain the health system and protect 4 million people.

¹ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/temporary-protected-status-united-states-grant-humanitarian-relief-less-permanent>

² <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-imfs-role-in-the-ebola-outbreak-the-long-term-consequences-of-structural-adjustment/5429970>

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2000/may/17/sierraleone3>

⁴ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13729504>

⁵ http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1990-06-16/news/9002190077_1_president-samuel-doe-liberian-military-aid

⁶ <http://www.startribune.com/anxiety-grows-among-minnesota-liberians-central-americans-as-tps-decisions-loom/458961443/>

⁷ <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/07/after-ebola/485609/>

⁸ <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-imfs-role-in-the-ebola-outbreak-the-long-term-consequences-of-structural-adjustment/5429970>

⁹ <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-imfs-role-in-the-ebola-outbreak-the-long-term-consequences-of-structural-adjustment/5429970>

What is Deferred Enforced Departure?

Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) is a federal program granted to Liberians by President Bush in 2007, after ending Liberia's TPS program. DED prevents removal, offers work authorization along with eligibility for travel.¹⁰ While created under President Bush, this designation was renewed by President Obama. Under President Trump this program has been under increased threat with a deadline of renewal of March 31st.

On March 31st, 2018, the Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) status of eligible Liberian U.S. resident, is set to expire. DED is a special immigration status that effectively suspends the deportation of eligible U.S. aliens.

President Donald Trump must issue a directive ordering the extension, which had been sought by some Members, notably from districts with significant populations of Liberian origin, also authorized those eligible to work during the duration of their DED status.

Why Re-authorize DED for Liberians?

Liberia is still recovering from decades of political unrest and the latest Ebola outbreak. Foreign experts who had flown in to support are leaving, and continued poverty makes life difficult for survivors and the communities they come from.¹¹ The political unrest and public health crisis in Liberia all sit in the context of western intervention that made investment in the public health infrastructure impossible and frequently backed dictators and rebels.

DED, like TPS is not charity it is justice. Liberians have made massive contributions to the neighborhoods and states they reside in.¹² Ripping these families apart would tear apart the fabric of many communities and abdicate the United States' responsibility after decades of disastrous intervention.

President Trump and Congress need to grant justice to the Liberian community by renewing Deferred Enforced Departure and providing a pathway to citizenship.

¹⁰ <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/deferred-enforced-departure/ded-granted-country-liberia/ded-granted-country-liberia>

¹¹ <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/07/after-ebola/485609/>

¹² <http://www.startribune.com/anxiety-grows-among-minnesota-liberians-central-americans-as-tps-decisions-loom/458961443/>