November 26, 2013

Hon. Rand Beers
Acting Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Mr. Beers:

We, the undersigned organizations, write to convey our deepest concern for the Philippines over the devastation brought by Typhoon Haiyan last week. Haiyan was one of the most powerful storms ever recorded on land, bringing sustained winds of 147mph and waves as high as 45ft. Our hearts go out to the nearly 7 million people affected by the typhoon as relief efforts are just beginning to get underway.

While the U.S. is directing much-needed food and relief aid to the Philippines, another way we can help limit the strain on that country's resources is by designating the Philippines for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) under §244(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Just less than four years ago, DHS and USCIS acted quickly in a very similar circumstance to designate Haiti for TPS after a massive earthquake and, in record time, stood up a procedure to process applications for nationals of that devastated nation. That response can and should be repeated for the Philippines.

While we do not yet know the full impact of Typhoon Haiyan on the Philippines, the facts that are emerging are chilling. Initial reports indicate that the death toll is believed to be in the thousands, and the number of people displaced by the massive storm rises into the hundreds of thousands. Reports are that every structure in Tacloban has been destroyed or seriously damaged. Tens of thousands are homeless, and food and water is scarce in the affected regions. Roads and transportation infrastructure are gone, not only delaying relief but presenting a massive rebuilding challenge to a nation already struggling financially. There is simply no way that the Philippines could absorb the return of its nationals under these conditions.

We therefore ask that the Philippines be designated for TPS with all due haste.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

18MillionRising.org
AFL-CIO
Alliance of Filipinos for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment
American Coalition of Filipino Veterans
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees

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Americans for Immigrant Justice
American Immigration Council
American Immigration Lawyers Association
American Jewish Committee
Apna Ghar, Inc. (Our Home)
Arab American Institute
Asian Americans Advancing Justice – AAJC
Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Asian Law Caucus
Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Chicago
Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles
Asian American Bar Association of Greater Chicago
Asian American Federation of Florida
Asian American Heritage Council, Inc.
Asian American Legal Advocacy Center
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund
Asian Chamber of Commerce of Arizona
Asian Law Alliance
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance and Institute for Asian Pacific American Leadership & Advancement
Asian Pacific Islander Caucus for Public Health
Asian Pacific American Law Student Association
Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center
Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon
Asian Services In Action
Asian Students Promoting Immigrant Rights through Education
ASISTA Immigration Assistance
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations
Association of Fil-Am Teachers of America
California Immigrant Policy Center
California Partnership to End Domestic Violence
Cambodian Association of Illinois
Campaign for Community Change
Casa de Esperanza: National Latina Network for Healthy Families and Communities
Central Philippine University Alumni Association Michigan -Windsor Chapter
Chinese Mutual Aid Association
Chinese Progressive Association
Church World Service
Coalition of Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach
Community Services & Resources
Council for Filipino American Organizations of Central Florida
DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs
El Centro de la Raza

Empowered Ideas
End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin
Fair Immigration Reform Movement
Filipino American Association of Brevard County, Florida Inc.
Filipino American Association of Fair Lawn, Inc.
Filipino American Association of Philadelphia, Inc.
Filipino American Community Action Group
Filipino-American Community Empowerment - San Diego
Filipino American Ladies Organization of Dayton
Filipino American Legal Defense & Education Fund, Inc.
Filipino American Network
Filipino American Women's Network, MN
Filipino Community Center
Florida Chinese Federation
Florida Immigrant Coalition
Florida's Space Coast Filipino American Charitable and Educational Foundation Inc.
Franciscan Action Network
Gay Asian Pacific Alliance
Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
HIAS
Hispanic Federation
Hmong-American Partnership, Fox Valley Inc.
Hmong National Development, Inc.
Hmong Nationality Organization
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
Indo-American Center
Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community
Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights - CLUE-CA
Japanese American Citizens League, Arizona Chapter
Judah Missionary Baptist Church
Kansas Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence
KAYA: Filipino Americans for Progress - DC Chapter
KAYA: Filipino Americans for Progress National
Korean American Community Services
Korean American Lawyers Association of Greater New York
Korean American Resource & Cultural Center
Korean Resource Center
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Mending Faces
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
NANAY Community Economic Development Corporation
National Alliance for Filipino Veterans Equity
National Alliance to Nurture the Aged and the Youth
National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association

National Asian Pacific American Bar Association
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, Arizona Chapter
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
National Council of Jewish Women
National Domestic Violence Hotline
National Federation of Filipino American Associations
National Federation of Filipino American Association, Illinois
National Federation of Filipino American Associations Region 5
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Forum
National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Network to End Domestic Violence
National Organization of Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance
New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women
New York Immigration Coalition
North American South Asian Bar Association
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
OCA South Florida Chapter
OneAmerica (Washington State)
Philippine-American Society of Greater Dayton
Philippine Chinese Association of America
Philippine Medical Society of Greater Philadelphia
Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
South Asian American Policy & Research Institute
South Asian Americans Leading Together
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
Tacoma Community House
Thai Community Development Center
The Council For Filipino American Organizations, Central Florida
The Episcopal Church
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
United We Dream
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
UNITED SIKHS
Uplift Internationale
U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
Youth Success Global Foundation Inc.
West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Wisconsin United Coalition of Mutual Assistance Associations, Inc.
World Relief