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The Advocates Welcomes Extension of Deferred Enforced Departure for Liberians

The Advocates for Human Rights welcomes the August 16, 2011, [announcement](#) by President Obama of an 18-month extension of Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) for Liberians living in the United States. The United States has protected Liberians living in the United States from deportation since 1991, when thousands of Liberians fled civil war and human rights atrocities. Had their legal status been allowed to expire in September, they would have faced deportation to a still struggling country and separation from their families, livelihoods, and communities. For twenty years, Liberians have registered for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) or Deferred Enforced Departure (DED), paying filing fees to renew their status and work authorization.

"We welcome the President's announcement extending DED," says Michele Garnett McKenzie, advocacy director at The Advocates for Human Rights, "and we now urge Congress to move forward to enact legislation granting permanent residence to those Liberians who are in the U.S. under this temporary program."

Although the country has made tremendous progress under the inspired leadership of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberia today remains one of the poorest countries on earth, with minimal health care resources, massive unemployment, and widespread sexual violence and armed robbery.

On June 3, 2011, over 100 organizations from around the United States submitted a letter to President Obama calling for the extension of Deferred Enforced Departure for Liberians. [Read the sign-on letter](#). On June 6, 2011, Members of the United States Senate wrote to President Obama calling for the extension of DED. [Read the letter from Senators](#).

Legislation to grant permanent resident status to Liberians has been introduced in both the Senate and House of Representatives. If enacted, [S. 1202](#) and [H.R. 2185](#) would allow Liberians currently in the United States under Deferred Enforced Departure to apply for lawful permanent resident status. Learn more at http://www.energyofanation.org/Liberian_Immigration_Legislation.html.

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The Advocates for Human Rights is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion and protection of internationally recognized human rights. With the help of hundreds of volunteers each year, The Advocates investigates and exposes human rights violations; provides representation to immigrants and refugees who have suffered human rights abuses; trains and assists groups that protect human rights; and works through education and advocacy to engage the public, policymakers, and children about human rights issues. The Advocates for Human Rights holds Special Consultative Status with the United Nations. www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org