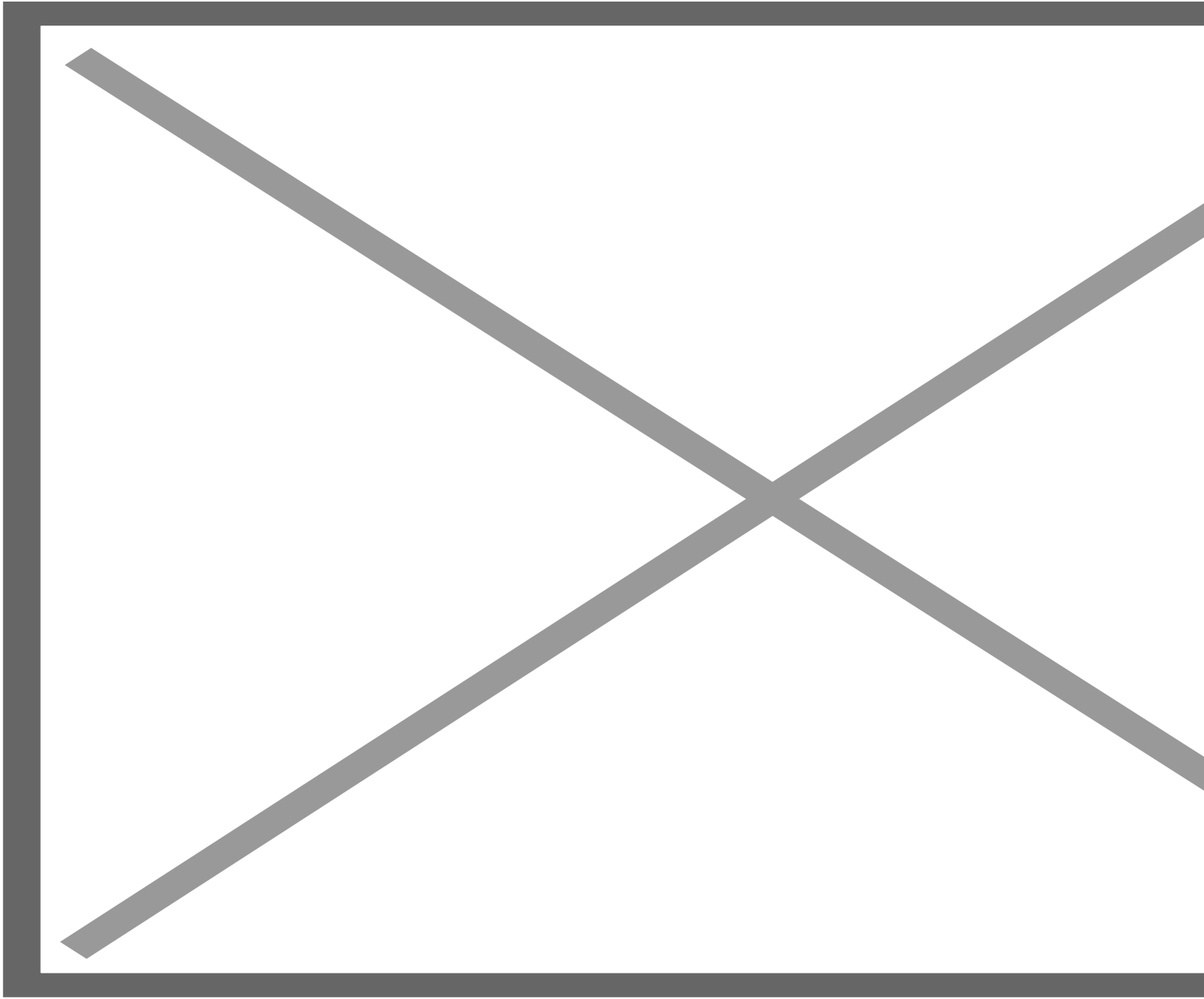


As Supreme Court clears way to deport Haitians and Syrians, faith leaders prepare for what's next

by [Madhiha Anis](#), [Kathryn Post](#), and [Fiona André](#)

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The US Supreme Court, April 7. (AP Photo/Rahmat Gul)

In a Supreme Court ruling released Thursday, the court sided with the Trump administration in a decision that could leave more than 350,000 Haitians and roughly 6,000 Syrians living in the US vulnerable to deportation.

In a 6-3 vote, [the court decided that judges can't second-guess](#) the US Department of Homeland Security's decision to end Temporary Protected Status for Syria and Haiti. It said the lower courts were wrong to

temporarily block the TPS terminations; those terminations can proceed while related lawsuits continue in lower courts.

“In these cases, we consider whether respondents, who challenge the termination of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for aliens from Syria and Haiti, are entitled to orders postponing the terminations during litigation. We hold that they are not,” Justice Samuel Alito wrote in the majority opinion.

Many faith leaders denounced the ruling.

The decision is “terrible,” said Bishop Nicolas Homicil of Voice of the Gospel Tabernacle church in Boston’s neighborhood of Mattapan, which is home to the largest Haitian community in the state. Homicil, whose congregation has been praying for over a year for TPS to be maintained, said 70 congregants now face deportation.

“I don’t know how long God’s going to allow this people to suffer like that under Pharisee . . .,” he said, referring to biblical figures often in opposition with Jesus. “It’s from bad to worse, because there was already anxiety, don’t know what to believe, what to trust, afraid. Now they’re going to chase (them) out from home to home again.”

Homicil, who worries about conditions inside US Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention centers, said the congregation will meet to pray on Friday night.

The court also held that the Haitian plaintiffs’ claim that their TPS was targeted due to racism was too weak to keep TPS in place while the suits proceed.

“None of the cited statements by either the President or the Secretary was overtly racial, and in substance all expressed policy views that could rest on race-neutral justifications,” Alito wrote.

During the 2024 presidential campaign, then-candidate Donald Trump and his running mate, JD Vance, spread false claims that Haitian migrants in Springfield, Ohio, were “eating the pets of the people that live there.” The plaintiffs also cited as evidence statements from Trump, such as claiming that Haitians were “poisoning the blood” of the nation, Justice Elena Kagan noted in her dissent.

For months, Haitian pastors, church leaders, and immigrant advocates have been preparing for this moment, warning that the decision could reshape communities that have spent years building lives in the United States.

Among them is Viles Dorsainvil, a Haitian immigrant, pastor, TPS holder, and executive director of the Haitian Support Center in Springfield, where an estimated 12,000 Haitians live. Back in April, he spoke outside the Supreme Court and urged the justices to consider the moral implications of removing TPS.

After the ruling, he said, “My faith helps me to cope with the decision, knowing that when our back is against the wall, God is still in control.”

Carl Ruby, founder of G92 Springfield, a faith-based immigrant justice organization, said in response to the court ruling that welcoming the stranger is not optional for Christians.

“Scripture teaches us to stand with the vulnerable, tell the truth about our neighbors, and refuse to let fear have the final word. Haitian families belong in our community, and we will continue to stand beside them with courage, compassion, and conviction,” he said in a statement.

Haitians were first granted TPS after the devastating 2010 earthquake. The designation remained in place through years of political instability, natural disasters, and worsening gang violence that have pushed Haiti into a prolonged humanitarian crisis. Syrians received TPS beginning in 2012 as civil war engulfed the country.

In 2025, the Trump administration moved to end Temporary Protected Status for Haiti and Syria, finding that the conditions that justified the designation no longer existed. The humanitarian program allows people from countries experiencing war, natural disasters, or other extraordinary conditions to live and work legally in the United States.

Immigrant advocates challenged the administration's move, arguing that Haiti remains deeply unsafe and that ending TPS would uproot families, separate communities, and place thousands at risk.

The fight over the program has been [particularly personal](#) in Springfield. The city's Haitian community faced bomb threats and demonstrations from neo-Nazi and White supremacist groups in the wake of the false pet-eating claims spread by Trump and Vance in 2024.

In anticipation of the Supreme Court decision, churches in Springfield hosted rapid response and "know your rights" trainings, coordinated food deliveries for Haitians fearful of leaving their homes, and secured passports for Haitian children born in the US. Some congregations, like Central Christian, have readied themselves to become places of sanctuary if ICE arrives.

"We've had to think about the issue of providing sanctuary, and when there are, when there's a conflict between man's laws and God's laws, we have an obligation to side with God's laws," said Ruby, who pastors Central Christian, in a press conference. "We are told that God loves immigrants, that we are to remember that we were once immigrants, and that we are to love immigrants. . . . The scriptures say a lot about this topic, and many of us feel a duty to stand with the Haitians."

Several faith-based refugee agencies condemned the court ruling, saying it allows the administration to strip TPS from many others.

"The Supreme Court has essentially handed the administration carte blanche to revoke protections of more than a million people who followed every rule, with no obligation to justify the decision and no court empowered to question it," Krish O'Mara Vignarajah, president and CEO of Global Refugee, said in a statement.

World Relief Haiti country director Pascal Bimenyimana noted that the US State Department had [renewed its warning to](#) US citizens not to travel to Haiti as recently as April. "Haiti has been in a protracted state of emergency for many years," said Bimenyimana.

In April, the US House of Representatives passed a bill to extend Haitians' TPS status for three more years. Earlier this week, Catholic bishops—including Archbishop Thomas Wenski of Miami and bishops across Ohio—[called on the US Senate](#) to pass the bill.

"They work hard, support their families, worship God regularly, and seek to live in peace," Ohio bishops said in a June 22 [statement](#). "We find no moral justification for terminating their Temporary Protected Status (TPS) without an alternative way to adjust their immigration status."

Legal experts said the court decision takes effect in 32 days. However, the Supreme Court decision does not close off all possible legal claims for TPS holders. Muslim Advocates, an organization that helped represent Syrian TPS holders before the Supreme Court, said the group would "continue to harness whatever legal tools available to us" to fight for clients' right to remain in the US. —Religion News Service