The 116th Congress faces urgent unfinished business shamefully left over from last year. Enactment of the DREAM Act and permanent relief for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders must be a priority in the early months of the new Congress to avoid the loss of legal status and potential forced expulsion of over a million individuals who have been living and working in the U.S. legally for years. Until now, legislation providing relief for TPS holders and Dreamers has generally been kept separate, but that no longer makes sense given how much the two groups share and the degree of urgency for an immediate solution for both groups.

**Who we are talking about**

Dreamers are immigrants who came to the U.S. as children and have grown up here, often having only vague memories of the countries where they were born. TPS holders are those who were granted legal status when their countries of origin became patently unsafe because of natural disaster or civil strife. About 80 percent of TPS holders have been living here legally for more than a decade, and almost half for at least 20 years.

**Act now to avoid deportations that few people want**

Absent Congressional action, deportations could start as soon as the courts rule, which could happen for some as early as the late spring. Both TPS and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which protects Dreamers, have been slated for termination by the Administration, though most people in both groups are temporarily, if uncertainly, protected while lawsuits wend their way through the courts. A loss in the courts could result in some individuals losing status very quickly, and hundreds of thousands of potential deportations over the course of the next two years.

**Common equities**

Dreamers and TPS holders have a lot in common, and in fact they overlap. An estimated 30 percent of TPS holders are themselves Dreamers who arrived in the U.S. at an early age, and untold numbers of Dreamers have family members with TPS. The groups also share strong equities that would make loss of status and forced removal particularly cruel, both to them and the families, employers, and communities who depend on them for sustenance, friendship, and support. Perhaps a quarter of Dreamers have U.S. citizen children, and another 270,000 U.S. citizens are the children of TPS holders who are at risk of losing their status.

**Legislation must pass quickly**

Very few Americans want either group to be forced to leave the U.S. once they realize who we are talking about. The obvious solution is combination bipartisan legislation, similar to the separate bills that garnered hundreds of cosponsors in the last Congress, that would allow TPS holders and Dreamers to remain here legally and permanently, with a reasonable pathway to eventual U.S. citizenship. This legislation enjoys broad support from business, religious groups, unions, and the general public – and even more intense support from those who know, work with, or love those in danger of losing status. These bills should be combined and enacted together.