



PRESS RELEASE

Attorney General Frosh Joins Coalition to Protect Liberian Residents of Maryland

BALTIMORE, MD (March 26, 2019) – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh has joined a coalition of 10 attorneys general in filing an [amicus brief](#) supporting Liberian nationals who have filed suit to block President Trump’s termination of their Deferred Enforcement Departure (DED) status.

The DED is an immigration program authorized by the President that allows foreign nationals whose countries have experienced armed conflict, civil unrest, natural disasters, or public health crises to stay in the country lawfully. Liberian nationals have been protected either by DED or Temporary Protected Status since 1991, following the outbreak of civil war in Liberia in 1989 that led to many Liberians fleeing to the United States for their own safety. Until this current administration, subsequent presidents have extended DED for Liberians.

On March 27, 2018, President Trump issued a direction terminating DED protections for Liberians, effective March 31, 2019. Starting on that date, Liberian immigrants who have been DED beneficiaries—some for more than two decades—may be subject to deportation.

“The President’s directive will needlessly tear families apart and put taxpaying, law-abiding Maryland residents in grave danger by sending them back to a country still in shambles from war, Ebola, and rampant poverty,” said Attorney General Frosh. “This policy shift is inhumane and will cause more harm than any ‘benefits’ that could possibly be derived from it.”

A group of plaintiffs who are scheduled to lose DED protections because of the President’s directive filed suit on March 8, 2019, in the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts. In *ACT vs. Trump*, the plaintiffs claim that the change to DED policy for Liberians is unconstitutional because it was based on racial animus and national-origin discrimination, has deprived DED beneficiaries of due process under the Constitution, and violates their constitutional rights to family integrity. They have filed a motion for the court to enjoin the current administration from enforcing the President’s directive. If granted, the injunction would prevent the administration from implementing the President’s directive, at least until the plaintiffs’ constitutional rights are fully adjudicated in federal court.

In their amicus brief in support of the plaintiffs, the states argue that their economies and communities would be harmed by the deportation of these foreign nationals, who are hardworking colleagues and civic-minded community members. The health care sectors in these states and the people who benefit from them would be particularly harmed by the deportation of

many Liberians who are valued health care workers. The states also argue that they have interest in protecting the welfare of children born to Liberian parents and raised in this country as U.S. citizens, and in ensuring that these children continue to live in stable and loving homes with their parents.

Today's amicus brief is led by Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison and Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey. In addition to Maryland, the brief is also signed by the Attorneys General of California, District of Columbia, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Virginia.