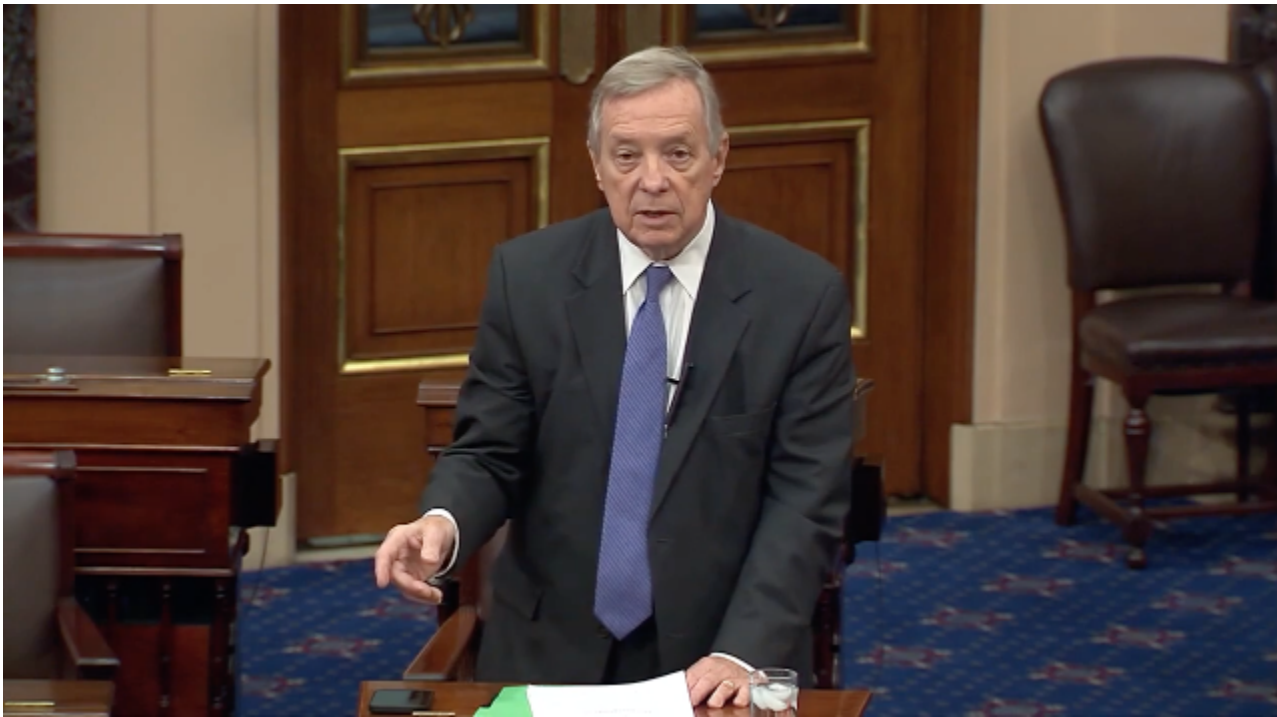


Durbin Meets With Venezuelan Migrants Who Fled Maduro Regime In Chicago

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CHICAGO – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, yesterday met with recent migrant arrivals in Chicago—many of whom fled the Maduro regime in Venezuela. After visiting with migrants to hear their stories and ask questions about their experience, Durbin met with City of Chicago leadership, including Project Manager for the Department of Family and Support Services Natalia Santillan; Deputy Mayor of Immigrant, Migrant and Refugee Rights Beatriz Ponce de Leon; and Chicago Park District Commissioner Rosa Escareño. Approximately 14,000 asylum seekers have arrived in Chicago since August 2022, when the Texas Governor first began busing asylum seekers to the city.

Durbin also discussed the recent decision by the Biden Administration to redesignate Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status (TPS), as he had requested. The Administration's original designation covered Venezuelans who had arrived in the United States by March 2021. Last week's announcement makes a similar designation for Venezuelan migrants who were residing in the United States on or before July 31, 2023.

“Venezuelans suffer every day under rampant corruption, human rights violations, hunger, and criminal mismanagement thanks to the Maduro regime. These horrors have driven millions of Venezuelans to leave their country in desperation and fear,” Durbin said. “The Venezuelans I met in Chicago will tell you that conditions under the authoritarian Maduro regime have only worsened since 2021. A new TPS designation not only provides protection from deportation, but allows Venezuelans in the U.S. to support themselves by working, which will provide much-needed relief to cities like Chicago who have welcomed migrants with open arms. I will continue working to identify additional federal mechanisms to support Chicagoans and the recent arrivals.”

For years, Durbin has led the fight for TPS for Venezuelans in the United States, including introduction of the *Venezuela Temporary Protected Status Act* to grant TPS for eligible Venezuelans—a move eventually taken by the Biden Administration in early 2021. In July, Durbin joined more than 20 of his colleagues in a [letter](#) to Secretary of State Antony Blinken and U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas to redesignate Venezuela for TPS.

Last September, Durbin [visited](#) the Salvation Army Freedom Center in the Humboldt Park neighborhood in Chicago to meet with migrant families.