

Supporting Haitian Immigrants with Employment Outcomes

Applied Policy Project

Prepared for: Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency



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CRRA | Carolina Refugee
Resettlement Agency

Mandatory disclaimer:

The author conducted this study as part of the program of professional education at the Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, University of Virginia. This paper is submitted in partial fulfillment of the course requirements for the Master of Public Policy degree. The judgments and conclusions are solely those of the author, and are not necessarily endorsed by the Batten School, by the University of Virginia, or by any other agency.

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Key Terms and Acronyms:

TPS – Temporary Protected Status

CRRA – Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency

DHS – Department of Homeland Security

Refugee – “A person outside his or her country of nationality who is unable or unwilling to return to his or her country of nationality because of persecution or a well-founded fear of **persecution** on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion” (Department of Homeland Security n.d.).

Asylee – “A person who meets the definition of refugee and is already present in the United States or is seeking admission at a port of entry” (Department of Homeland Security n.d.).

Immigrant – A person living in a country other than their birth country (Bolter, n.d.)

Humanitarian parole- Allows individuals temporary stay United States for a period of up to two years

Executive Summary:

Haitian immigrants are the second largest ethnic group in the United States with temporary protected status. Temporary protected status is a humanitarian protection designated to countries facing ongoing armed conflict, environmental disturbances (earthquake, hurricane, epidemic), or other temporary and extraordinary conditions. Individuals from TPS designated countries may apply for this status to gain temporary stay in the United States (Department of Homeland Security, n.d.).

The United States has granted temporary protections to seventeen countries, ranging from Afghanistan to South Sudan. There are 863,880 individuals in the United States with temporary protected status, and 200,005 of those are Haitians (National Immigration Forum, 2025).

On February 20, 2025, DHS Secretary Noem, amended the period of extension and redesignation of Haiti from 18 months to 12 months. TPS for Haiti will end on August 3, 2025. Under the Biden Administration, TPS was extended and redesignated for 18 months, with a February 2, 2026 end date. With the new administration, the extension and redesignation period was shortened to 12 months, reflecting the August 3, 2025 date (National Immigration Forum, 2025).

It is unknown whether TPS Haiti will be extended and redesignated after the August 3, 2025 expiration date. A decision from the DHS Secretary will be made at least 60 days prior to August 3, 2025. The DHS Secretary has the ability to extend TPS for a 6-month period, extend TPS for a 12–18-month period, or cancel the designation entirely. The DHS Secretary's decision is due on June 4, 2025 (National Immigration Forum, 2025).

If TPS Haiti is terminated after the August 3, 2025 date, TPS holders revert back to their previous immigration status. Those without legal status, will be subject to deportation proceedings (National Immigration Forum, 2025). Due to the recent changes in federal policy, the below document will evaluate three policy alternatives to assist Haitian immigrants legally permitted to stay in the U.S. with employment outcomes at the *Carolina Refugee Agency*.

The below document evaluates policy alternatives that:

- 1) Provide Funding to Competency-Based ESL

- 2) Provide Funding to Haitian Heritage and Friends of Haiti (HHFOH)
- 3) Expand Legal Services Support

Each policy alternative is based on the criteria of cost, effectiveness, political feasibility, and legality. Therefore, the final recommendation is to provide funding to Competency-Based ESL at Central Piedmont Community College. Despite being the costliest alternative, it is the most effective due to the variety of studies in support.

Acknowledgments and Dedication:

I would like to thank Professor Gerard Robinson for his continuous support and guidance throughout the APP process. He worked strategically with me to identify the best client for the

project. I would like to thank Professor Benjamin Castleman, who was also a great support during the process. He worked with me to solidify my alternatives, provide sources to support my alternatives, and supported me through the project's challenges. I would like to thank Marsha Hirsch, Executive Director of the Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency, who took the time to meet with me to discuss the project details. She helped me gain a deeper understanding of the TPS process and the agency's important services. I would like to thank my dad who always supported and encouraged me throughout graduate school.



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Introduction

The purpose of the below document is to evaluate three policy alternatives to aid Haitian immigrants at the Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency (CRRA) with employment outcomes. The CRRA provides extremely helpful employment services to refugees and immigrants at the agency. The Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency has Employment Case Managers who identify and maintain relationships with employers, assist with job applications and the onboarding process (employer orientations, drug tests). In addition, the organization provides digital and financial literacy as a part of job readiness activities and follows up after the hiring process to confirm that the employer and client are satisfied. Due to the recent change in federal policy, TPS Haiti could end on August 3rd 2025. This means that employment authorization tied to TPS status will end. Improving employment outcomes has the potential to increase financial stability for immigrants before TPS ends. Financial stability is necessary in the time of uncertainty, allowing immigrants room to save money for unexpected transitions. The below document proposes the expansion of employment services at the CRRA.

Problem statement:

Original Problem statement:

Haitian parolees at the *Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency* are applying for temporary in the absence of needed assistance. TPS is a status offered to countries facing armed conflict (civil war), environmental disasters (hurricanes, earthquakes), and other temporary and extraordinary conditions (Department of Homeland Security, n.d.). There is an ongoing humanitarian crisis in Haiti, it is the poorest country in the Americas, and one of the poorest countries in the world (USAID, 2022). Gangs rule 85% of Port Au Prince (the capital of Haiti), 90% of the population lives in poverty, and 4 million face food insecurity (IRC, n.d.; World Relief, 2024; World Report, 2025). If Haitians cannot successfully apply for TPS, deportation into life threatening conditions is possible. Too few Haitian parolees in Charlotte, North Carolina have enough support to navigate the temporary protected status application process.



Due to recent changes in federal policy regarding TPS Haiti, the policy alternatives focus on employment outcomes for Haitian immigrants legally permitted to stay in the United States.

Client Overview:

The Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency is a deeply impactful organization. Its mission is “to receive, to connect, and to empower, newly arrived refugees in the Charlotte area so that they begin successful and self-sufficient lives in the United States.” The Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency provides resettlement services to refugees and asylees escaping violence, persecution, and repression. The CRRA is a nonprofit organization with 501c3 status. The organization was founded in 2011 and works with both the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid society (HIAS). HIAS is a national humanitarian organization that places refugees with local affiliates across the country. HIAS forwards the names of incoming refugee arrivals to the Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency (CRRA, n.d.).

When refugees arrive to Charlotte, North Carolina, the CRRA provides aid during their first 90 days in the United States, also known as the initial resettlement period. The process begins with a caseworker meeting the newly arrived refugee at the Charlotte airport. The CRRA furnishes and stocks apartments with food so that new arrivals have a comfortable place to stay. During the initial resettlement period, the CRRA helps refugees find housing, employment, apply for social benefits, and move toward self-sufficiency. Arrivals also receive help with registering their children for school and have the ability to attend English as a Second Language (ESL) classes (CRRA, n.d.).

Beyond the initial resettlement services, the CRRA provides assistance for refugees and asylees up to five years from the date of arrival. These services include medical case management, employment assistance, immigration services, and a savings program and financial literacy training (CRRA, n.d.).



Problem and Client Connection

The goal of the *Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency* is to move refugees toward self-sufficiency. Haitian parolees arriving to the CRRA do not receive the same services as refugees. Attaining refugee status comes with automatic benefits, such as housing, the ability to work, medical screening upon arrival, and cultural orientation classes (Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.), however, these services vary for parolees. Because humanitarian parole is an expedited and emergency alternative to refugee status, Haitian parolees do not automatically receive the same services. This can be a barrier to moving Haitian parolees toward the goal of self-sufficiency. The CRRA wants to help Haitian parolees but are limited in scope because Haitians are not refugees. In order to become a refugee, a person's home country must face political persecution, and Haiti is not. Afghan and Ukrainian refugees have an in-house legal service coordinator to help them apply for TPS. Haitian parolees cannot receive help from the legal service coordinator because Congress allocated funds specifically for Afghan and Ukrainian refugees to have assistance. BIA (Board of Immigration Appeals) accredited staff does their very best to help Haitians with their TPS application, however, they still run into barriers because they are not trained attorneys.



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Haitians risk deportation and the return to torture, violence, or death when their TPS applications are denied or delayed. A simple blank on the application can lead to a delay, causing anxiety. Some Haitians at the CRRA struggle to track, organize, and plan. There are misunderstandings about the precision/accuracy needed to complete formal documentation. Despite misunderstandings, the application for TPS is a deeply complex legal document. Haitians need help with the TPS application as the humanitarian crisis in Haiti escalates. There are 300 armed criminal groups and 200 gangs using sexual violence to terrorize the population (Hernandez-Roy, et al, 2024). It is difficult for Haitians to lead successful and self-sufficient lives in Haiti. The

Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency cannot endure Haitians and their children being deported back to these conditions.

Background on the Problem:

French Rule

The disastrous circumstances of Haiti can be attributed to its historical, environmental, cultural, and economic biproducts. The region was once ruled by the French and given the colonial name, Saint Domingue. Saint Domingue was the richest colony in the world in 1791, producing sugar, coffee, and cotton, which enriched the French economy. The French made fortunes without regard for the enslaved population and built division between those of Black heritage. Mulattos, those of European and African descent, were given privileges from the French that monoracial Black individuals did not have. Mulattos held high-ranking positions in society, and one-third owned slaves (Gros, 2000 & Saye, 2010). The French rule pitted Mulattos against Blacks, Blacks against Whites, and Whites against Mulattos, to create and division (Charles, 2021, Saye, 2010).

The strategy of division was successful, with the effects of colorism bleeding into the twentieth century. Haiti (once named Saint Domingue) gained independence from France in 1804 due to the Haitian Revolution, the only successful slave revolution in modern history (Gros, 2000 & Saye, 2010). This bestowed great racial pride among the Black population, and led to the establishment of the Haitian Constitution, which granted all Black people freedom and citizenship. This major accomplishment sent a shock wave through the New World and threatened the security of slavery in the southern United States (Gros, 2000 & Saye, 2010).

The Duvalier Regime

Although Haiti was free of French rule in 1804, the region was split. Mulattos dominated the West and the South, while the Blacks dominated the North. The region reunified in 1820, but racial tensions between Mulattos and Blacks did not subside. When the Duvalier regime rose to power in the 19th century, it supported state-sponsored terrorism. The population was jailed for unjustifiable reasons and nightly curfews were mandated. The regime focused on controlling the population instead of economic development and stability (Gros, 2000 & Saye, 2010).

Corruption was a foundation of the regime, over 120 million dollars were embezzled from the government. The Duvalier regime's 30-year reign, ending in 1986, is a contributor to Haiti's instability and corruption (Charles, 2021). In 2006, Haiti was ranked the most corrupt nation in

the world by Transparency International's annual corruption survey (Saye, 2010). Today, the corrupt values from the Duvalier regime live on.

International Relations

Despite Haiti's location in the Americas, it was not recognized by the United States until 1862. A free Black nation was viewed as illegitimate to the White world. Thomas Jefferson made a policy to isolate Haiti internationally and end trade with the region. Thomas Jefferson did this by implementing a trade embargo in 1806, shortly after Haiti's freedom from French rule. The United States also excluded Haiti during the Pan-American Conference for newly independent Spanish colonies and the first International Conference of American States in 1888. European powers including Great Britain were unwilling to recognize Haiti, although Haiti was Britain's largest export supplier. Haiti had to pay France \$150 million to be recognized in 1838 (Saye, 2010).

Environmental Disturbances

Haiti is a region prone to environmental disasters. The Caribbean nation had three major hurricanes prior to the 2010 earthquake that left the region vulnerable. The three hurricanes in 2004, 2007, and 2008, affected over 1 million people and killed over 6,000 (Charles, 2021). On January 12, 2010, the 7.0 magnitude earthquake devastated the nation, killing over 200,000 people, and leaving 300,000 injured (Cadichon, et. al., 2023). Government and administrative buildings were demolished, 4,000 schools were damaged/destroyed, and 1.5 million people were homeless (Disasters Emergency Committee, n.d.). A cholera epidemic erupted, and the damage resulting from the earthquake was a barrier to aid, (Cadichon, et al., 2023) leaving 216,000 people infected (Disasters Emergency Committee, n.d.). Psychological disturbances overwhelmed the region, with children showing signs of severe PTSD (Cadichon, et al., 2023). Haiti still suffers today from the catastrophic damage from the 2010 earthquake. Figure 1 demonstrates the severity of the 2010 earthquake across the region.



Figure 1

Haiti Today

Individuals pursue temporary protected status as a way to flee environmental, political, and economic disturbances associated with the region. TPS provides individuals with safety until conditions in their home country stabilize. As of March 31, 2024, there were 863,880 people with temporary protected status living in the United States, and 486,418 initial or renewal TPS applications (American Immigration Council, 2024). In the state of North Carolina alone, there are 22,140 individuals with temporary protected status (Wilson, 2024). TPS allows protection from death, terror, homelessness, and violence. Present day Haiti still suffers from political instability, violence, and insecurity. It is one of the most vulnerable regions in the world when it comes to natural disasters. The region is prone to frequent floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes. There are 5.4 million individuals who struggle to find food daily, and 700,000 are displaced due to gang violence. In June 2024, there were 34,896 cholera cases (World Bank, 2024).

Women and children are two vulnerable sub-populations in Haiti. Women and girls are at risk of gang rape. Gangs control 85% of Port Au Prince and have close ties with police officers and economic elites. This hinders accountability for crime (World Report, 2025). Children lack access to quality education and healthcare due to the region's deteriorating conditions. As of January 2025, only 37% of health facilities in Port Au Prince were functional. In December 2024, *Bernard Mevs Hospital* in Port-au-Prince and the *General Hospital* were attacked. Gangs kidnapped and murdered physicians, nurses, healthcare workers, journalists, and humanitarian workers. Hospitals and clinics were burned, ransacked, and destroyed (United Nations, 2025). In addition, children are at risk of cognitive and physical limitations due to malnourishment and lack of care (World Bank, 2024; World Report 2025).

What is TPS?

Due to Haiti's past and current cultural, environmental, historical, and economic barriers, many Haitians seek temporary protected status. TPS is a status offered to countries facing armed conflict (civil war), environmental disasters (hurricanes, earthquakes), and other temporary and extraordinary conditions (Department of Homeland Security, n.d.). Temporary protected status is designated to an entire country; but eligibility is determined on an individual basis through an application process. Only individuals TPS designated countries are eligible to apply for the status.

Temporary protected status is vital to remaining in the U.S. without fear of deportation. The status provides individuals with working permits and travel authorization. In order to gain TPS, a person must:

- Be a national of a country designated for TPS
- File an application during the registration period
- Be continuously physically present in the U.S. since the effective date of the most recent designation date of your country
- Have continuously resided in the United States since the date specified for your country



(Department of Homeland Security, n.d.)

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Currently, sixteen foreign countries are eligible for TPS, including Haiti, Ukraine, Afghanistan, and Ethiopia. There are 200,005 Haitians with TPS in the United States, and they are the second largest ethnic group in the U.S. with TPS (Wilson, 2024).

Consequences of the Problem: Why Haitians Need TPS

Haitians must attain TPS, or risk returning to extreme levels of violence. Currently the capital of Haiti, Port Au Prince, is overrun by violent gangs who control 85% of the city. The assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in 2021, in combination with a 7.2 magnitude earthquake the same year, left a power vacuum (World Relief n.d.; Hernandez-Roy, 2024; World Report 2025). This has led to the rise of 300 armed criminal groups and 200 gangs who use sexual violence to terrorize the population (Hernandez-Roy, et al., 2024). Sexual violence has been a historical tool used by the Duvalier regime that reigned in Haiti for 30 years.

Women and girls are experiencing gang rape at unprecedented levels. Family members are forced to watch these horrific acts. The sexual violence is not limited to women, but young boys are being forced into sexual relationships with their mothers and sisters. Gangs dominate police forces and possess lethal weapons, which leaves the population without adequate protection (Hernandez-Roy, et al, 2024). In addition to sexual violence, 90% of the population lives in poverty and 4 million face food insecurity (IRC, n.d. & Hernandez-Roy, et al, 2024). The crisis in Haiti cannot be understated and is referred to as the worst humanitarian crisis in the Western Hemisphere (World Relief, 2024).

Between 2010 and 2020, Haiti received \$13 billion in international aid from the United Nations. Funds were allocated toward disaster relief and development programs. USAID is Haiti's largest donor; Haiti has cost USAID \$5 billion in disaster relief since 2010. The 2010 earthquake cost Haiti \$8 billion in reconstruction. Following the earthquake, there were crop losses of up to 70% between 2015 to 2017 due to a drought. By 2023, Haiti had received a total of \$4.3 billion in aid (Roy & Cara, 2024).

Haitians Need Help Applying for TPS

Haitians at the CRRA are in need of TPS as humanitarian parolees. Refugee approval is a lengthy process that can take years, but humanitarian parole status is a quick and legal way for individuals to seek protection in a host country.



What is humanitarian parole?

Humanitarian parole allows individuals residence in the United States for a temporary period of up to two years. During these two years, Haitian parolees may apply for TPS which permits them longer stay in the U.S. until conditions in their home country stabilize. Those with humanitarian parole status have the ability to apply for work authorization. Humanitarian parolees are granted entry into the United States if they can demonstrate urgent humanitarian reasons for being admitted (Department of Homeland Security, n.d.; American Immigration Council, 2024). This status is an emergency alternative to refugee status, it is an expedited process that allows individuals to enter the United States **legally** and quickly. Those granted parole status must have a financial sponsor present in the U.S. and pass a background check, among other requirements. There are distinct differences between refugee status and parole status. Refugees must arrive to the United States with the predetermined legal status of a refugee. This means that refugees are obligated to apply for refugee status in advance and while overseas, whereas parolees do not have to apply for parole status in advance.

In addition, attaining refugee status is a lengthy process. Some requirements to attaining refugee status include:

- Receiving a referral to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP)
- Applying to the Department of Homeland Security while overseas
- Undergoing an interview process with a USCIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services) officer
- Meeting refugee criteria established by the United Nations

Attaining refugee status comes with automatic benefits that parolees do not immediately have, such as the ability to work, receive housing services, cultural orientation classes, and a medical screening upon arrival (Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.). Without these

automatic services, Haitian parolees may struggle to understand U.S. culture and procedures, inhibiting their ability to successfully apply for temporary protected status (TPS).

Alternatives and criteria for evaluation:

Policy Alternative 1: Provide Funding to Competency-Based ESL Courses

Competency-Based ESL is an English intervention that allows students to learn language for situations encountered on a daily basis. This differs from standard ESL, which focuses on grammar and theoretical knowledge (Auerbach, 1986). A *Competency-Based ESL* course may teach skills for reading and understanding telephone numbers, asking for assistance when completing an application, providing relevant information, and asking to speak to someone (Griffith & Lim, 2014). According to a [study](#) of adult language learners in Australia, a greater level of *Competency-Based ESL* achievement was associated with job attainment (Ehrich, et al, 2010), the study shows that *Competency-Based ESL* equips learners with concrete skills needed for life beyond the classroom.

The effects of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) were studied across adult immigrants in a Massachusetts language program called Framingham Adult ESL Plus (FAESL+). The [study](#) analyzed the effect of ESOL courses (offered by FAESL+) on employer-reported earnings as well as civic engagement. It was found that attending ESOL had large positive effects, attending ESOL courses increased annual average earnings by 56% or \$2,400 (Heller & Mumma, 2023).

In another Massachusetts [study](#), an English For Advancement (EFA) program was analyzed. EFA is a language training program that focuses on employment-focused language instruction, career coaching, and job placement assistance. Participants were assigned to either a treatment group that included EFA instruction, or a control group without EFA instruction. The study took place across two years, and those in the treatment group were 6.4 percentage points more likely to be employed than the control group in the second year. In the control group, 58.8% of participants were employed in the second year, and in the treatment group 65.2% of participants were employed in the second year (treatment indicated a 6.4 percentage point increase). It was found that EFA had a statistically significant effect on earnings, the treatment group earned \$2,621 more than the control group after two years. The control group earned \$17,859 annually in the

second year, and the treatment group earned \$20,480 in the second year (this demonstrates a \$2,621 increase) (Roder & Elliot, 2020).

Based on the above evidence, I propose that the CRRA provide funding to a *Competency-Based ESL* course at [Central Piedmont Community College](#) located in Charlotte, North Carolina. The program will be designed to improve English language skills to assist Haitian immigrants with employment outcomes. **It is important to acknowledge that the *Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency* already provides client referrals to ESL courses.** One of the locations that the CRRA provides ESL referrals to is Central Piedmont Community College. Therefore, I propose the creation of a *Competency-Based ESL* program at Piedmont Community College that aids Haitian immigrants with employment outcomes. The program would run for 8 weeks for 8 hours a week at Piedmont Community College. Classes would meet for 2 hours Monday - Thursday. The program would be taught by Central Piedmont Community College staff. Haitian immigrants would learn about the program at the *Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency* through handouts, flyers, and referrals.

Policy Alternative 2: Provide Funding to Haitian Heritage and Friends of Haiti (HHFOH) [Haitian Heritage and Friends of Haiti](#) is an ethnic-based community organization located in Charlotte, North Carolina. *Ethnic-Based Community Organizations* provide targeted services to specific ethnic populations (Vu, 2017). They help ethnic populations find jobs, learn English and U.S. customs, connect immigrants to their communities, and assist youth in college preparation (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.; Vu 2017; Vu, 2008). *Ethnic-Based Community Organizations* have seven characteristics: they “(1) generally serve ethnic populations, (2) have majority staff that reflects the ethnic population served, (3) have an ethnic majority on its board, (4) have ethnic community/power support, (5) include ethnic content in programs/services, (6) promote family well-being, and (7) uphold an ideology that fosters ethnic identity and participation in decision making.” *Ethnic-Based Community Organizations* are located in the communities they serve, providing an array of services, including health, mental health, child and family services, and human services to ethnic populations. These organizations provide clients with familiarity, trust, and solidarity because staff resembles and understands the context of the population served (Vu, et al, 2017; Vu, 2008).

According to a [panel analysis](#) in Germany that studied the size of co-ethnic networks on immigrant economic success, larger co-ethnic networks increased the probability of employment. Immigrant network size increased the probability of working by 4 percentage points (Battisti, et al, 2018). In another [study](#) that examined proximity to ethnic networks on employment outcomes, it was found that the closer an individual lives to an ethnic group, the higher probability of attaining a job. Individuals have a higher chance of attaining jobs due to increased social capital. Through strong social networks, job opportunities are relayed (Patacchini & Zenou, 2012). Another [study](#) that examined the impact of ethnic organizations on socio-economic adaption, found that ethnic organizations assisted in lifting Eastern Europeans out of poverty. Connection to ethnic organizations reduced their reliance on public funds, helped them locate job placements, and promoted adaptation (Majka & Mullen, 2002).

I propose the expansion of *HHFOH* services to include a job readiness program. The *Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency* should provide funding to *Haitian Heritage and Friends of Haiti* for the program. The job readiness program should last 7 weeks and meet for 3 hours a day Monday-Friday. The program should include resume services, interview preparation, and career coaching. The program will be taught by *HHFOH* staff. Haitian immigrants at the *CRRRA* will learn of this service through a referrals and flyers.

Policy Alternative 3: Expand Legal Services Support

A legal service coordinator is a trained attorney who has a comprehensive understanding of legal terminology and document preparation. This allows them to review documentation for errors or miscommunication. Legal service coordinators enhance agency efficiency by providing expertise in legal areas and managing documentation to ensure accuracy (Corona, 2024). An immigrant may desire access to legal services to better understand immigration laws and learn their basic rights (Miller, 2025). An immigrant may seek legal services for help navigating immigration cases and attaining employment authorization. For example, to apply for Haiti TPS, an applicant must file form I-821. For employment authorization I-765 must be submitted. Assistance is needed for the completion of these forms.

According to a research [report](#) on the economic impacts of the [Access to Representation Act](#) (would allow legal representation to immigrants facing deportation proceedings in New York),

immigrants with legal representation are 61% more likely to receive a judgement that allows them to remain in the U.S. than those without legal representation. It was found that if an additional 53,000 immigrants are prevented from deportation, the federal, state, and local government would gain a net present value benefit of 8.4 billion over 30 years. This is likely the result of work authorization and increased employment. Gaining work authorization through the assistance of legal service coordinators, helps immigrants to [integrate into the economy faster](#). According to a [participatory study](#) on accessing legal services in Chicago, all participants identified the need for legal services, which remove barriers for accessing TPS and work authorization. The study consisted of 58 migrants from the Southern Border, composed of Spanish-speaking adults and Haitian adults (Miller, 2025).

One additional legal service coordinator should be hired at the *Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency* to aid Haitian immigrants with employment needs. The legal service coordinator will specifically aid Haitian immigrants with legal documentation, employment authorization, and connecting them to employment opportunities. The legal service coordinator will operate in office at the *CRRRA*.

Criteria

Effectiveness

The effectiveness criteria will be used to determine whether increased employment is likely to occur for Haitian immigrants. The effectiveness criteria will evaluate each alternative on its ability help Haitian immigrants with employment opportunities.

Political feasibility

Political feasibility will be evaluated based on the likelihood that the *Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency* will support the alternative. Agency support will depend on public perception and the status of immigration legislation. Currently, the Trump Administration is rolling back TPS designations. With the number of recent policy changes, it is possible for TPS access for Haitian populations to change.

Cost

The cost criteria will be determined based on the direct and indirect costs to the *Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency* associated with each alternative. The direct costs are likely to

include labor (wages and benefits) and office supplies (equipment) to run services. The indirect costs are likely to include general office expenses and referral fees.

Legality

The legality criteria will be evaluated based on whether the alternatives comply with *CRRA* policies. The *Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency* can only adopt policy alternatives that adhere to agency policies.

Findings, Implementation, and Recommendations

Introduction:

Haitian parolees at the Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency are applying for TPS without adequate support. On February 20, 2025, the Trump Administration, amended the period of TPS extension and redesignation of Haiti from 18 to 12 months. This means that TPS for Haiti could end in August 2025 (USCIS, n.d.). Due to the recent change in federal policy, the following alternatives will support Haitian immigrants who are legally permitted to stay in the U.S. with employment outcomes. The below document will evaluate three policy alternatives to aid Haitian immigrants with employment outcomes at the CRRA. The three policy alternatives are to Provide Funding to Competency-Based ESL, Provide Funding to Haitian Heritage and Friends of Haiti (HHFOH), and Expand Legal Services Support. Competency-Based ESL is an English intervention that provides individuals with situation skills ex: reading and understanding telephone numbers or asking to speak to someone) (Griffith & Lim, 2014). Funding to HHFOH will allow the creation of a job readiness program for Haitians. The expansion of legal services support will assist Haitian immigrants with the documentation needed to gain employment. Each alternative will be evaluated on the basis of Effectiveness, Political Feasibility, Cost, and Legality.

Alternatives Analyzed by Criterion:

Alternative 1: Provide Funding to Competency-Based ESL

Effectiveness

According to a [randomized enrollment study](#) on a Massachusetts language training program called Framingham Adult ESL + (FAESL+), individuals enrolled in ESOL earned 56%, or \$2,400 more in annual earnings than the control group after two years. (Heller & Mumma, 2023).

In an RCT [study](#) English For Advancement (EFA) was analyzed. EFA is a language training program that focuses on employment-focused language instruction, career coaching, and job placement assistance. Those in the program were 6.4 percentage points more likely to be employed than the control group in the second year. In the control group, 58.8% of participants were employed in the second year, and in the treatment group 65.2% of participants were employed in the second year (treatment indicated a 6.4 percentage point increase). The treatment group earned \$2,621 more than the control group after two years (Roder & Elliot, 2020). The control group earned \$17,859 annually in the second year, and the treatment group earned \$20,480 in the second year (this demonstrates a \$2,621 increase)

Research indicates that language training, including employment-focused language training, increase the likelihood of employment and higher earnings. Based off of the EFA study, a competency-based ESL program in NC should increase earnings by \$2,175.43.

Cost

For a *Competency-Based ESL* program to be funded, direct costs would include staff salaries, such as the instructor and career coach salaries. ESL instructors at Central Piedmont Community College make \$31.49 per hour, or \$65,499.20 annually. Career Coaches at Central Piedmont Community College make \$47,160 annually. One instructor and one career coach would be employed for the program. The program would serve 15 students. Other direct costs would include curriculum costs, teacher training, and learning technologies (computers, software). The costs largely focus on curriculum materials over equipment and supplies. It is assumed that Central Piedmont Community College is already equipped, with desks, projectors, chairs, and written materials. This is because Central Piedmont Community College has an existing ESL program; therefore, it is likely that this equipment is in place. The Competency-Based ESL

course is modeled after the ESL courses in place, therefore, it will last 8 weeks and meet 8 hours a week. The total cost for the program is \$292,266.38.

Political Feasibility

It is moderately likely that the Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency would support this alternative. The CRRA currently provides ESL referrals to clients at the agency. Two organizations that the CRRA provides language referrals to are Central Piedmont Community College and Refugee Support Services. Due to the agency's familiarity with Central Piedmont Community College, and support for language services, it is moderately likely for a Competency-Based ESL program to be funded.

Legality

The Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency is funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, (ORR) an agency within the U.S Department Of Health and Human Services. Therefore, funds are allocated to the *CRRA* to support basic refugee services during their first 90 days of resettlement. ORR has requirements and restrictions on how funds are allocated. It is unlikely that funding could go toward the creation of a Competency-Based ESL program. It may be possible for the CRRA to apply for federal, state, or local grants to support the program.

Alternative 2: Provide Funding to Haitian Heritage and Friends of Haiti (HHFOH) – Creation of Job Readiness Program

Effectiveness

According to a [longitudinal survey study](#) in Germany that studied the size of co-ethnic networks on immigrant economic success, larger co-ethnic networks increased the probability of employment. Immigrant network size increased the probability of employment by 4 percentage points (Battisti, et al, 2018). The average employment rate was 68.8%, and the immigrant network size increased average employment rate to 72.8%.

In a [UK labor force survey study](#) that examined proximity to ethnic networks on employment outcomes, it was found that the closer an individual lives to an ethnic group, the higher probability of attaining a job. It was found that when individuals live in ethnic communities, the probability of working together increases by over 33%. Individuals are 6.9 percentage points more likely to work together when referrals (shared information about job opportunities) are

present, than when not (Patacchini & Zenou, 2012). The research demonstrates that ethnic communities play a positive role in job attainment. Ethnic-based community organizations create ethnic networks, fostering connections that lead to shared information about job opportunities and preparation. Because ethnic based organizations create ethnic networks, immigrants have more resources to direct each other to employment opportunities (ex: job readiness program).

Haitian Heritage and Friends of Haiti operates as an ethnic network for Haitians in Charlotte, North Carolina. Embedding a job readiness program into its current services, can enhance the support that it already provides. An RCT study examined work readiness programs for low-income adults across the U.S. One of the programs was called Jobs First-Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN), which took place in Los Angeles County, California. Evaluation of the program took place across two years, and it was found that the program increased earnings by an average of \$2,050 relative to the control group. Based on this, a job readiness program may increase earnings by \$2,050 (Hartog, et al, 2016).

Political Feasibility

It is moderately likely that the *Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency* would support this alternative. The *CRRRA* already provides refugees with employment services. However, the above alternative may be helpful when it comes to language barriers. For example, Haitian immigrants may gain the skills needed to utilize employment services at the *CRRRA* more effectively. The *CRRRA* is in support of ethnic-based community organizations, however, it is uncertain whether the agency would support a job readiness program.

Cost

For a job readiness program to be funded at *Haitian Heritage and Friends of Haiti*, the direct costs would include staff salaries, instructional materials (technology), classroom space, and equipment (chairs, desks). The program would include career coaching, interview preparation, resume and cover letter services, and employment search support. One instructor should be employed to teach the program, along with one career coach. A job readiness instructor makes \$89,000 annually and a career coach makes \$47,160 annually. The classroom will hold 20 students, and the program will run for 7 weeks and meet for 3 hours a day Monday-Friday. A separate classroom space will be needed to hold the job readiness program. The total cost of the job readiness program is \$155,443.75.

Legality

ORR is limited in its scope in funding; therefore, it is unlikely that funds could be allocated for a job readiness program at HHFOH. It may be possible for the *CRRRA* to submit a grant proposal to the federal government (Department of Health and Human Services, ORR falls underneath this department) to attain these funds.

Alternative 3: Expand Legal Services Support

Effectiveness

According to a research [report](#) on the economic impacts of the [Access to Representation Act](#) (allows legal representation to immigrants facing deportation proceedings in New York), immigrants with legal representation are 61% more likely to receive a judgement that allows them to remain in the U.S. than those without legal representation. It was found that if an additional 53,000 immigrants are prevented from deportation, the federal, state, and local government would gain a net present value benefit of 8.4 billion over 30 years (Economic Benefits, 2024). This is likely the result of work authorization and increased employment. It was found that asylum seekers in NYC could earn \$470 million if work authorization is obtained.

The Vera Institute [studied](#) the New York Immigrant Community Project (NYIFUP), which provides universal representation for detained individuals in deportation hearings. It was found that clients with legal aid were released at a rate of 49%. Clients who were not provided legal aid were released at a rate of 25%. This represents a 24-percentage point increase in release rate when legal aid is provided. It was also found that legal aid helped 400 individuals gain or maintain work authorization through winning immigration cases (Stave, et al, 2017). Facing deportation proceedings have the ability to hurt employment and work authorization. *The evidence suggests that legal support plays a positive role in attaining and maintaining work authorization.* Based on the evidence, an additional legal service coordinator at the *CRRRA* can help Haitian parolees gain or maintain work authorization, improving employment outcomes.

According to the Immigration Research Initiative, the medium wage for undocumented immigrants is \$32,000 annually. It was estimated that gaining work authorization increases earnings by \$3,200 per year, resulting in \$35,200 yearly earnings. Based in this Haitian

immigrants could earn an additional \$3,200 per year with work authorization. Undocumented immigrants in Charlotte, North Carolina make [\\$31,000](#) per year, therefore, annual earnings may increase to \$33,200 per year (Immigration Research Initiative, 2023).

Political Feasibility

It is highly likely that the *Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency* will support the above alternative. Currently, the CRRA has one legal service coordinator in office that supports Afghan and Ukrainian refugees. In addition, some staff members at the agency have a Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) accreditation, which allow them to provide legal advice to clients. However, those with BIA accreditation are limited in the assistance they can provide because they are not trained attorneys.

Cost

For a Legal Service Coordinator to be employed at the *Carolina Refugee Agency*, an annual salary of \$198,873 should be provided. Direct costs for an additional legal service include office space and equipment (computer, desk). Indirect costs include the legal service fees charged by the organization. The legal service coordinator will assist in providing these services. Overall, the cost of employing a legal service coordinator at the *Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency* is \$207,830.

Legality

It is highly unlikely that the *Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency* has the ability to hire an additional legal service coordinator. ORR is limited in its funding scope and does not allow legal service coordinators to assist Haitian parolees with TPS. The *CRRA* cannot and will not misuse funds allocated by Congress.

Figure 2: Outcomes Matrix

	Cost	Effectiveness	Political Feasibility	Legality
Alternative 1: Competency-Based ESL	\$292,266.38 (Medium)	\$2,621 increase in earnings across two years	Medium	Medium
Alternative 2: <i>Haitian Heritage and Friends of Haiti (HHFOH) –Job Readiness Program</i>	\$155,443.75 (Low)	\$2,050 increase in earnings across two years	High	Medium
Alternative 3: One Additional Legal Service Coordinator	\$207,830 (Medium)	Above \$3,200 increase in earnings across two years	High	Low

Recommendation:

Based on the above evaluative criteria, a Competency-Based ESL course should be implemented at Piedmont Community College. Although this alternative is the costliest, it is highly effective. Studies show that language training, including Competency-Based ESL training, increase the likelihood of employment and increased earnings (Heller & Mumma, 2023; Roder & Elliot, 2020). According to a study of a Massachusetts language training program, those enrolled in ESOL earned 56%, or \$2,400 more in annual earnings than the control group after two years (Heller & Mumma, 2023). In another study that analyzed the effects of an employment-focused language training program, those in the program were 6.4 percentage points more likely to be employed than the control group in the second year. Those in the program earned \$2,621 more than the control group after two years (Roder & Elliot, 2020). The *Carolina Refugee Agency*

already provides referrals to ESL courses; therefore, it is likely that the agency would support referrals to an additional language service.

Implementation:

Alternative 1: Provide Funding to Competency-Based ESL

To implement the above alternative, the first step is to host meetings with Central Piedmont Community College. This would be done to ensure that faculty supports the alternative. It would be vital to discuss funding needs for the program at these meetings. Stakeholder input is essential in knowing how much money is needed to carry out a successful program, especially because the college already hosts ESL courses. A risk is that funding needs may exceed expectations of the *CRRA*. A way to mitigate this, is to suggest cutting class sizes and the number of instructors.

Once the correct funding total is secured, the second step is to train the language and career coaching instructors. Workshops, training sessions, and textbooks should be acquired to inform staff how to teach the curriculum. It would be important for the trainings to address the ways that Competency-Based ESL differs from a standard ESL course. The training sessions should identify what skills the course seeks to improve (reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills) and structure activities and assessments after them.

Once staff training is completed, the third step is to conduct baseline assessments of student's reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The assessments should be taken on Chromebooks through the canvas software. Data from the baseline assessment will inform the pace of the course for instructors. A risk of pacing the course after the baseline assessment, is that not all student needs will be met. Those with less language skills may need extra support; therefore, this can be mitigated with tutoring resources. Another risk of the course is that not all students may complete the course. Given the political climate, there is a broad risk of deportation.

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Appendix. Cost Calculations

Policy Options:	Cost Calculations
<p>Alternative 1: Competency Based ESL Program at Central Piedmont Community College (Class size of 15)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ESL Instructor Salary: \$65,499.20 annually - Career Coach Salary: \$47,160 annually - ESL Tutor Salary: \$57,156 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Three tutors hired ($\\$57,156 \times 3$) = \$171,468 - Professional Development Training and Ongoing Support: \$160 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o \$160 per instructor ($\\160×2) = \$320 o 4 workshops held over 8-week course ($\\$320 \times 4$) = \$1,280) <p>Learning Materials: \$6,859.18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classroom Laptops (<u>Chromebooks</u>): \$329.99 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 15 laptops: ($\\$329.99 \times 15$) = \$4,949.85 - <u>Headphones:</u> \$18.59 o 15 headphones: ($18.59 \times 15$) = \$278.85 - Competency Activity <u>Workbooks</u>: \$29.75 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 30 activity booklets ($\\$29.75 \times 892.5$) = \$892.5 - Competency-Based Instructor Education Textbook: \$43.99 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 2 textbooks ($\\$43.99 \times 2$) = \$87.98 - Estimated Cost of Competency-Based Student Textbook: \$43.00 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 15 textbooks ($\\$43.00 \times 15$) = \$645 - Advertising Costs to Program o Printing flyers and handouts: \$0.10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § ($\\$0.10 \times 50$) = \$5.00 <p>Total Cost: \$292,266.38</p>

Alternative 2: Provide Funding to
Haitian Heritage and Friends of Haiti
 (HHFOH)– Creation of Job Readiness
 Program (Class size of 20)

Job Readiness Instructor Salary: \$89,000 annually

Career Coach Salary: \$47,160 annually

Classroom Equipment: 16,599.9

Student Combination Desk: \$224

- $(\$224 \times 20) = \$4,480$
- Classroom Laptops ([Chromebooks](#)):
\$329.99
 - $(\$329.99 \times 20) = \$6,599.9$

- Cost of Classroom Space: \$1,000
- Classroom Projector: \$2,651.00
- Classroom Screen: \$1,869.00

Learning Materials: \$1,723.85

- Instructor Desk: \$577.00
- Binders: \$24.99 (Bulk)
- Folders: \$21.99 (Bulk)
- Pack of pencils: \$5.69
- Pack of pens: \$6.59
- Pack of highlighters: \$9.99
- Advertising Costs to Program: \$5.00
 - Printing flyers and handouts: \$0.10
 $\$ (\$0.10 \times 50) = \$5.00$
- Notebooks/paper: \$55.00 (Bulk package)
 Student [textbooks](#): \$50.88
 $(\$50.88 \times 20) = \$1,017.6$

**Professional Development Training and Ongoing
 Support: \$960**

\$160 o \$160 per instructor $(\$160 \times 2) = \320

- 3 workshops held over 7-week course $(\$320 \times 3) = \960

Total Cost: \$155,443.75

Alternative 3: Hiring One Additional Legal Service Coordinator

- **Legal Service Coordinator Salary:** \$198,873 annually
- **Estimated Cost of Private Office Space:**
 - \$34.00 per square foot
 - 150 square feet
 - $(\$34.00 \times 150) = \$5,100$
- **Desk:** \$339.00
- **Chair:** \$245
- **Computer:** \$998.00
- **Immigration Legal Services and Fees:**
 - Consultation: \$30
 - Change of Address: \$15 per person
 - Replacement Green Card: \$100
 - Petition for Alien Finance: \$100
 - Petition for Relative per beneficiary: \$250
 - Affidavit of Support: \$350
 - Travel Document: \$125
 - Notice of Appeal or Motion: \$350
 - Refugee Green Card: \$100
 - Asylee Green Card: \$100
 - Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition per Beneficiary: \$100
 - Petition to Remove Condition of Residence: \$130
 - EAD Replacement (Work Permit): \$100
 - Citizenship Adult: \$225
 - Certificate of Citizenship: \$100 o FOIA: \$50 - \$150 (Average = \$100)

Total Cost: \$207,830

Documentation of AI:

Artificial intelligence was used to direct me to studies (links) that focused on employment outcomes for the effectiveness criteria. I directly gathered data from the articles themselves. AI was used to gather ideas on how to implement policy alternative 1 (ex: importance of meeting with stakeholders and using assessment tools). Under policy alternative 2 (effectiveness), I asked AI for ideas on how to link the studies back to ethnic-based organizations and employment outcomes.

I used artificial intelligence to better understand the recent change in federal policy regarding TPS Haiti. I wanted to better understand how the loss of TPS affects employment and financial stability. AI helped me identify the link between the need for employment support in times of uncertainty (bottom of the introduction on page Lastly, I used AI to provide me with better word choice in the first sentence of my problem statement.