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The Honorable Jamie Raskin
2242 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C 20515

September 29, 2021

Dear Congressman Raskin,

I write to request support and accompaniment for [Pauline Binam](#) during an appointment on Friday, October 1, at 10:00 a.m. at the U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Baltimore Field Office located at 1 North Charles St., Baltimore, Maryland.

Pauline is a Cameroonian American woman living in the United States since she was three years old. She was previously held in ICE custody at Irwin County Detention Center in Ocilla, Georgia. In September 2020, a [whistleblower complaint](#) revealed an alarming pattern of coerced or forced [sterilizations](#) of migrant women. She has reason to fear deportation because she was outspoken about the non-consensual removal of one of her fallopian tubes.

I request that you contact ICE officials and Deportation Officers Meadows and Southard at the Baltimore field office to secure assurances that Pauline will not be detained at the check-in.

I also ask that staff from your district office meet Pauline at 1 North Charles St. in Baltimore on Friday, October 1, at 9:30 a.m. and accompany her to the scheduled check-in.

Beyond the immediate and necessary protection Pauline deserves, we continue to urge Congress to support a designation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Cameroon and strongly encourage President Biden and DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas to extend TPS to Cameroon.

Since 2016, the Cameroon American Council has led members of the Cameroonian diaspora and advocates in promoting #CameroonTPS as urgent relief to civilians fleeing conflicts in Cameroon. Today, conditions are increasingly dire, as five armed conflicts have overtaken 8 of the 10 regions in Cameroon. Civilians face a humanitarian crisis due to political turmoil following the 2018 presidential election and 2020 local elections, as well as [ongoing violence](#) stemming from the 2016 Anglophone Crisis, the invasion of Boko Haram and Seleka/Anti-Balaka militias, as well as government repression of political opposition and gender and sexual minorities. As a result of their intersecting identities, Cameroonian women have been disparately impacted.

Of the 3.9 million Cameroonians in need of humanitarian assistance, an astounding [40,000 people](#) are seeking refuge in the United States. Migrants are entitled to seek refuge from rampant human rights violations under international law. Civilians [fleeing Cameroon](#) as a result

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of [torture](#), arbitrary imprisonment, and targeted violence undoubtedly qualify as refugees or asylees under both U.S. and international law. Still, 38.4 percent of Cameroonian asylum claims were [denied](#) in FY2020.

The United States [criminalizes Cameroonians who seek asylum](#) within its borders, which is a violation of both U.S. and international law. In U.S. detention centers, persons from Cameroon face degrading anti-Blackness and anti-Africanness. Some detained Cameroonians were even [forced to sign](#) deportation paperwork despite concerns of persecution or torture following forced repatriation, while others have been [assaulted](#) or [transferred](#) for demanding humane treatment.

Few alternatives to TPS are available to Cameroonians and even fewer are viable for Cameroonian women. A 2017 Pew Research Center [study](#) found that less than 5 percent of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program recipients came from the combined total of all countries on the entire continent of Africa, and fewer than 0.1 percent (130 individuals) of Cameroonian origin were [DACA recipients](#). Additionally, Cameroonians are unlikely to receive protections under legislation such as The Migrant & Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act. Cameroonian women are more improbable recipients of [farmworker](#) protections, as only 22 percent of farmworkers are women and less than 1 percent of farmworkers are from Cameroon.

The U.S. must fulfill its humanitarian, ethical, and legal duties to the people of Cameroon. The situation is harrowing for both civilians in Cameroon and Cameroonians in U.S. detention centers. After surviving armed conflict and humanitarian crisis in Cameroon, only to find harsh conditions in the United States, Cameroonians need the peace and stability that TPS provides—even if temporary.

If you have questions, please contact Samah Sisay <ssisay@ccrjustice.org> or Sylvie Bello <cameroon.american.council@gmail.com>.

Sincerely,



Nadia Ben-Youssef
Advocacy Director
Center for Constitutional Rights