

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 30, 2014

The Honorable Barack H. Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to strongly urge you to direct the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to create a Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program in order to save lives and accelerate Haiti's recovery efforts. This would allow Haitians with approved family-based visa petitions to come to the United States while they await their visas.

Tragically, over 200,000 Haitians were killed and millions more were affected by the catastrophic 7.0 magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010. The devastation left Haiti's infrastructure severely compromised and its citizens vulnerable. Over four years later, approximately 150,000 Haitians still live under deplorable conditions in the country's infamous tent camps, and tens of thousands have had no other alternative but to live in unsafe, makeshift shelters that comprise the informal settlements around Port-au-Prince. In addition, while the United Nations (UN) has played an important role in the post-earthquake recovery effort, it has failed to adequately address and take responsibility for a deadly cholera outbreak that has killed more than 8,500 Haitians and sickened more than 700,000 since October of 2010.

Furthermore, many media reports have documented what the U.S. Coast Guard knows all too well. Desperate Haitians are increasingly abandoned and dying at sea as they resort to smugglers to cross perilous routes in search of a better life, including the notoriously treacherous 80-mile-wide Mona Passage strait toward Puerto Rico. According to Captain Mark Fedor, Chief of Enforcement of the U.S. Coast Guard's Seventh District in Miami, "[the smugglers] want to get the run done and collect their money...there's probably a lot of death we don't know about."

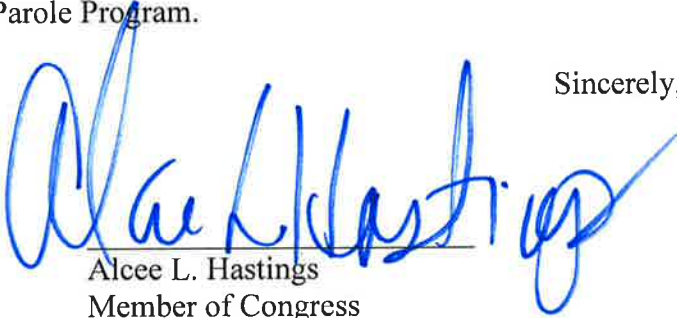
As of November 1, 2013, DHS had approved family-based immigrant visa petitions for 109,489. However, due to arbitrary per country limits, they unconscionably remain on waiting lists of up to more than 12 years in Haiti. Your administration can take immediate steps to save and improve lives by allowing Haitians who have already been approved to join their families in the United States.

The Cuban Family Reunification Parole Program, which was created by DHS in 2007 and subsequently renewed by your administration, has successfully paroled tens of thousands of approved Cuban participants into the United States. Creating a Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program would not only save lives and reunite families, but empower individuals to actively assist in Haiti's recovery. Haitians remit about \$2 billion annually, mostly from the diaspora in the United States, and Haitian parolees would be able to obtain work permits and send much-needed remittances back to Haiti.

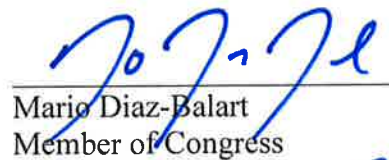
The creation of a Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program is supported by 100 Members of Congress from both parties, 10 major editorial boards in at least 17 editorials, the New York and Philadelphia city councils, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, American Bar Association, Miami-Dade County Commission, Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick, and thousands of petitioners.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. The people of Haiti are incredibly resilient and eager to take control of their future. We therefore urge you to put an end to the indefinite waiting lists as soon as possible through the creation of a Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program.

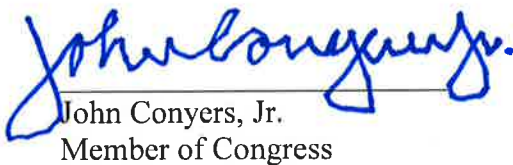
Sincerely,



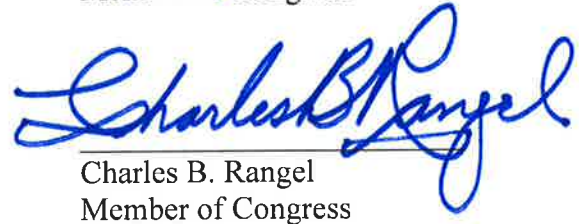
Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress



Mario Diaz-Balart  
Member of Congress



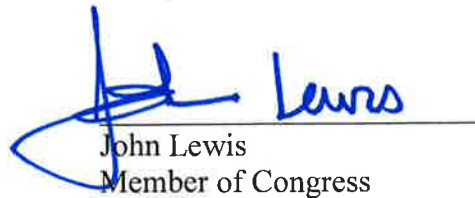
John Conyers, Jr.  
Member of Congress



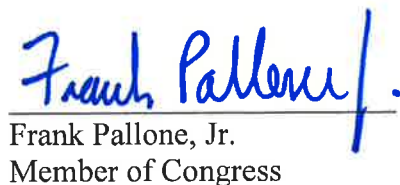
Charles B. Rangel  
Member of Congress



George Miller  
Member of Congress




John Lewis  
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress




Eliot L. Engel  
Member of Congress




---

Jim McDermott  
Member of Congress



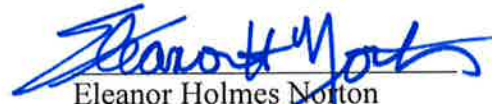
---

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen  
Member of Congress




---

James P. Moran  
Member of Congress




---

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



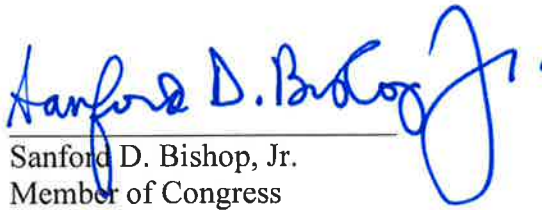
---

Maxine Waters  
Member of Congress



---

Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress




---

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress



---

Corrine Brown  
Member of Congress




---

Luis V. Gutiérrez  
Member of Congress



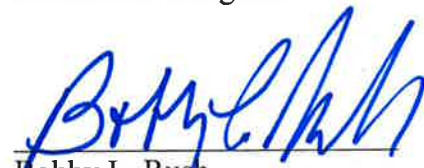
---

Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Member of Congress




---

Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Member of Congress



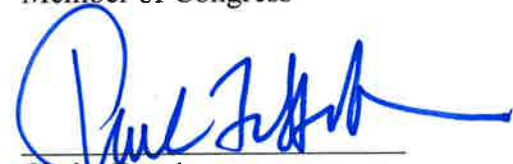
---

Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress




---

Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress



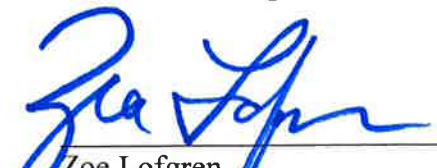
---

Chaka Fattah  
Member of Congress



---

Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress



---

Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress

Donna M. Christensen  
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

Gregory W. Meeks  
Member of Congress

John F. Tierney  
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

Michael E. Capuano  
Member of Congress

Janice D. Schakowsky  
Member of Congress

Wm. Lacy Clay  
Member of Congress

Michael M. Honda  
Member of Congress

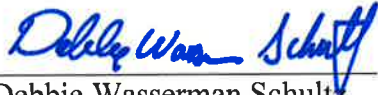
Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress

David Scott  
Member of Congress

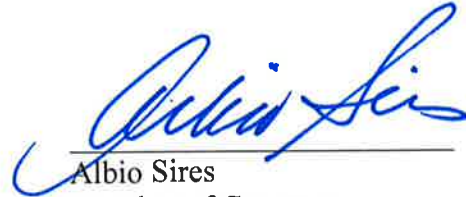
Emanuel Cleaver  
Member of Congress

Al Green  
Member of Congress

Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress



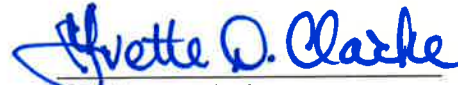
Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



Albio Sires  
Member of Congress




Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



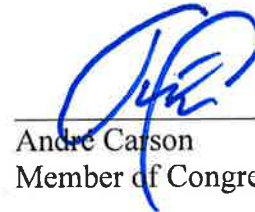
Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Peter Welch  
Member of Congress



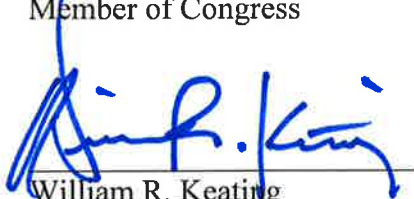
Andre Carson  
Member of Congress



Theodore E. Deutch  
Member of Congress



Karen Bass  
Member of Congress



William R. Keating  
Member of Congress



Cedric L. Richmond  
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



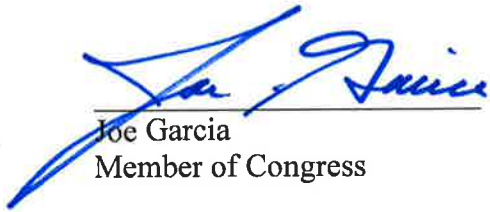
Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Matt Cartwright  
Member of Congress



Lois Frankel  
Member of Congress



Joe Garcia  
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress



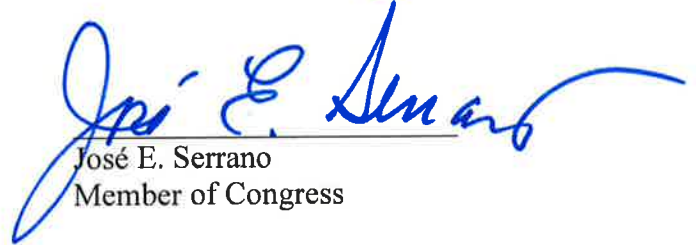
Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress



Elijah E. Cummings  
Member of Congress



José E. Serrano  
Member of Congress



Donna F. Edwards  
Member of Congress

Cc:

The Honorable Jeh Johnson  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

The Honorable John Kerry  
Secretary, U.S. Department of State