



Haiti Reborn

Haiti Reborn Program Update

Cancel Debt Fast: Haiti Days of Action October 2-4, 2007

Make a Call to Congress this week!
(script/talking points below)
Capitol Switchboard (202) 224-3121
Not sure who your member of Congress
is? [Go here](#)

Background: Over half of the loans Haiti continues to pay were granted to corrupt and brutal dictators like Francois and Jean-Claude Duvalier. The Haitian people continue to pay interest on these loans of a clearly odious nature. This is money that could be used to invest in health care or education in a country where almost a quarter of children under five are chronically malnourished and only 35% of students are able to complete primary school. These loans divert over \$57 million per year from a country where half the people struggle to survive on \$1 a day or less. While the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the Inter-American Development Bank have allowed Haiti to enter their debt cancellation programs they hold Haiti under the onerous framework of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. In the meantime Haiti will pay \$110-140 million more in debt service to these institutions.

Understanding the immediate need for action, Representatives Waters, Bachus, Delahunt, Lee, Payne, Conyers, Gutierrez and Maloney introduced H.Res 241 on March 13, 2007. HR 241 now has 65 cosponsors and still needs more! The resolution recommends that the Secretary of the Treasury and the U.S. Executive Directors at the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank exercise US influence to completely and immediately cancel Haiti's debt to these institutions.

Take Action!

October 2-4: National call in days. We urge concerned citizens to take action by contacting their representatives to demand congressional action on HR 241 Haiti Debt Cancellation Act. If your member of Congress has already co-sponsored the



resolution give them a call anyway. Thank them for co-sponsoring the resolution and ask him/her when we can expect a vote on the resolution. Then ask her/him to also co-sponsor the Jubilee Act HR 2634.

Also, let your member of Congress know about the briefing on October 4. Call your representative in both the district and Washington, DC offices. Find script for contacting your Representative below.

October 2-4: Walk the Halls- Meetings with Congressional Members to encourage support for debt cancellation.

October 4: *Haiti Can't Wait for Debt Cancellation* Congressional Briefing on HR 241 3:30-5:00pm Room 2105 Rayburn House Office Building. The panel is co-sponsored by Jubilee USA, TransAfrica Forum, Partners in Health, Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti, and the Quixote Center.

Script to call your Representative:

1. Find out who your Representative is by entering your zip code at www.house.gov (upper left corner)
2. Pick up the phone and call the Capitol Switchboard: **(202) 224-3121**
3. Ask to be connected to your Representative's office. The receptionist will answer. Introduce yourself as a constituent from _____ (city), (state)
4. Say some version of the following: "I am calling to urge Representative _____ to co-sponsor the Haiti debt cancellation resolution (H Res 241), if she/he has not already done so. This bill would provide immediate debt cancellation for Haiti. By canceling the debt immediately we can support Haiti in the improvement of healthcare, education, sanitation and other essential services and infrastructure. I urge Representative _____ to co-sponsor this important legislation. To co-sponsor, your staff should contact Kathleen Sengstock in Representative Maxine Waters' office at (202)225-2201." (You can stop there, or add an additional sentence about why this issue is important to you). Then thank the receptionist and say goodbye.

Cancel Debt Fast for Haiti in Boston

From [Health Blog](#), an online-only feature of the Boston Globe, September 25, 2007:



Boston doctor fasting for debt relief for Haiti

A Boston doctor is fasting for three days as part of a national push to cancel Haiti's debt to the developed world.

Dr. Evan Lyon, a hospitalist at **Brigham and Women's Hospital** and a researcher

in its division of social medicine and healthcare inequalities, has worked in Haiti for the past 10 years through **Dr. Paul Farmer's** organization, **Partners in Health**.

Because of his connection to Haiti, Lyon got involved with the **Jubilee USA Network**, a coalition of 80 religious denominations across the country that wants Congress to cancel the debt of 26 countries and make it easier for other nations to find financial relief.

"Hunger is the most important issue that we see" in Haiti, Lyon said in an interview yesterday, the second day of having only one small meal and water. "It's not uncommon for the people I take care of to come into the clinic not having eaten for one or two days. I chose to take this fast on with the understanding that for me it's a pretty modest thing to do."

Jubilee, which has organized a 40-day fast across the country that began Sept. 6, takes its inspiration from the biblical meaning of a jubilee year. Debts are canceled and slaves are freed every seven years, according to the book of Leviticus. The Jubilee Act is awaiting a hearing before the U.S. House Financial Services Committee, according to the network.