

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 28, 2008

The Honorable Henry M. Paulson, Jr.
Secretary of the Treasury
Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Paulson:

We urge you to use your influence to expedite the cancellation of Haiti's debts to the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and other multilateral financial institutions and to urge an immediate suspension of all further debt service payments from Haiti to these institutions.

As you know, these institutions have already agreed to cancel Haiti's debts, but under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, Haiti must complete a number of final steps before receiving debt cancellation. However, Haiti is the most impoverished country in the Western Hemisphere – many believe it should have been admitted to the HIPC process ten years ago – and for a number of reasons would benefit from an immediate cessation of debt service payments.

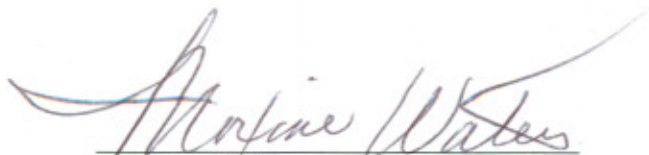
Haiti endured two hurricanes last year, following three years of civil conflict and decades of environmental devastation. Tens of thousands of people have either lost their homes or seen them severely damaged. Thousands remain in temporary shelters, and the combination of the two storms last year has devastated harvests throughout the island.

Given these circumstances, we feel that the people of Haiti would be better served if the government could use its limited resources to address the environmental crisis, improve healthcare, expand access to education, and reform the justice system. Haiti's government has already agreed to use the savings from debt service relief for these purposes.

We think it would be best if Haiti reached the "completion point" for the HIPC process immediately and had its debts cancelled. In the interim, before such cancellation takes place, we urge you to call for an immediate suspension of all further debt service payments from Haiti to the multilateral financial institutions. We understand that Haiti is scheduled to send \$48.7 million to these institutions in 2008. Clearly, this money would be better spent on basic infrastructure and poverty reduction for the Haitian people.

We appreciate your continuing support for debt cancellation for poor countries, and we hope you will do everything in your power to suspend Haiti's debt service payments and expedite debt cancellation for Haiti.

Sincerely,



Maxine Waters



Spencer Bachus

Barney Frank

Barney Frank

Luis Gutierrez

Luis Gutierrez

Eliot Engel

Eliot Engel

Donald M. Payne

Donald M. Payne

Earl Blumenauer

Earl Blumenauer

Carolyn B. Maloney

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Charles Rangel

Charles Rangel

James Oberstar

James Oberstar

Barbara Lee

Barbara Lee

Bill Delahunt

Bill Delahunt

William Jefferson

William Jefferson

Danny K. Davis

Danny K. Davis

David Price

David Price

Marcy Kaptur

Marcy Kaptur

Howard L. Berman

Howard L. Berman

José E. Serrano

José E. Serrano

Edolphus Towns

Edolphus Towns

Melvin L. Watt

Melvin L. Watt

James Moran

James Moran

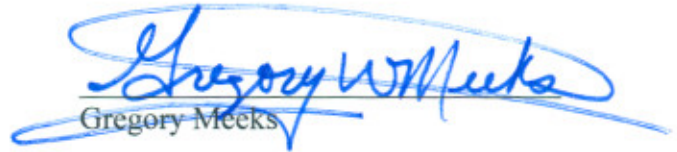
Robert Wexler

Robert Wexler


Chaka Fattah

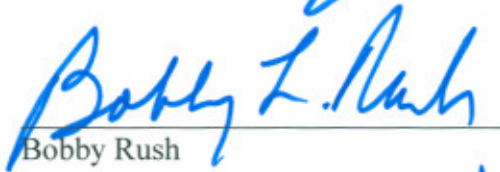

Raúl M. Grijalva


Corrine Brown

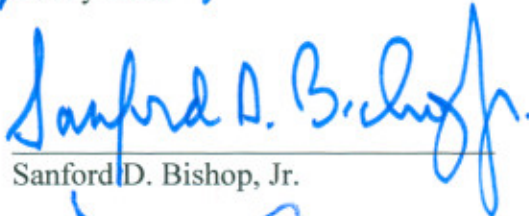

Gregory Meeks


Alcee L. Hastings


Joseph Crowley


Bobby L. Rush

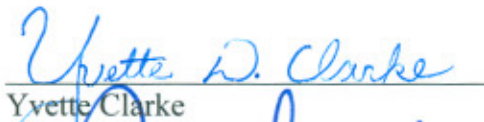

John Conyers

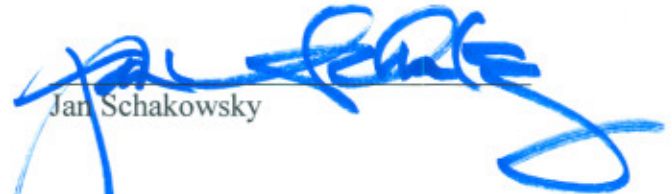

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.


Sheila Jackson Lee

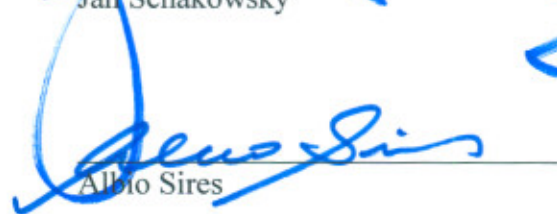

Tammy Baldwin


Louise M. Slaughter

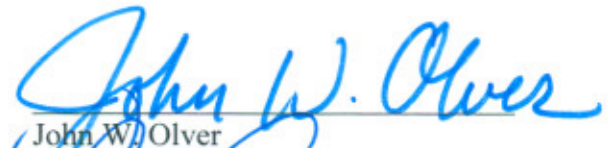

Yvette Clarke


Jan Schakowsky


Pete Stark

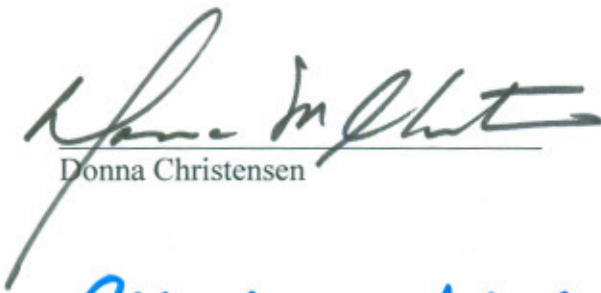

Albio Sires


Kendrick Meek


John W. Olver


Sam Farr


Gwen Moore


Donna Christensen


Michael Honda


Debbie Wasserman Schultz


Brad Miller


John Lewis


Michael Doyle

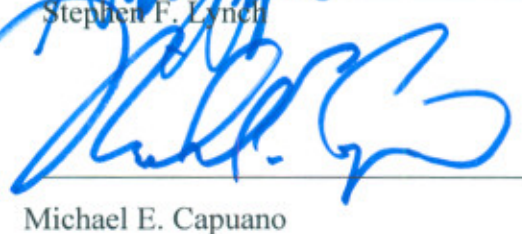

Al Green


Diana DeGette


James P. McGovern


Stephen F. Lynch


Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.


Michael E. Capuano

