



United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0905

BILL NELSON
FLORIDA

June 29, 2009

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I just returned from a fact-finding trip to Haiti where I found the conditions improving but unacceptable. I write to request that you consider extending Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitian nationals currently residing in the United States.

In the wake of the four devastating hurricanes that hit Haiti last fall, deportations to Haiti were temporarily suspended. However, the suspension was short-lived: in December the Bush administration resumed the deportations and denied President Préval's outstanding request to grant TPS for Haitians in the U.S.

More than two years ago, I met with senior White House officials in the Bush Administration and urged them to grant Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Haitians. The United States has granted TPS to Salvadorans, Hondurans, and Nicaraguans, while ignoring the dire circumstances that Haitian immigrant would face if they returned home. I urged the previous administration to end this discriminatory and duplicitous policy, which singles out one nationality for different treatment and overlooks the realities of the economic situation in Haiti.

Haiti's post-disaster situation has further compromised the tenuous economic and security situation in the country. In addition, the drop in remittances brought on by the global economic crisis is exacerbating the situation on the ground.

The American people and our international partners have provided very generous assistance to the Haitian people. To further stabilize Haiti and support its people get out of the cycle of poverty, I suggest that you suspend deportations and seriously consider extending TPS for Haitians currently in the U.S.

I understand that your administration is conducting a new policy review of this issue and I ask that you consider my views in light of this review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Nelson" with a long, sweeping underline.