



## Congress of the United States House of Representatives

June 23, 2009

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I have written personal letters to Secretary of State Clinton and Secretary of Homeland Security Napolitano, urging them to grant Temporary Protective Status (TPS) to the 30,000 Haitian Nationals currently at risk for deportation. And just last month, I initiated a letter to you, Mr. President, with the support of 24 congressional colleagues, asking for your support and immediate action in this TPS matter. I have been advised that the policy is currently under consideration by your Administration, but months have gone by and it is important that we understand that time is of the essence.

There are currently 30,000 Haitians who have "final orders of removal", which, as you know, are orders of deportation for individuals who have exhausted all of their appeals. Persons with final orders of removal are ineligible for work authorization. This means that there are approximately 30,000 Haitians living in the US who are not permitted to earn a living to take care of their families in the US and abroad. Remittances make up 1/4 of Haiti's GDP, so this is a direct impact on the economic deprivation in Haiti. As your Administration takes this opportunity to review the TPS policy, it is imperative that we allow these individuals an opportunity to work.

I propose that your Administration grant these individuals Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) while you continue to review TPS for Haitians. The DED would at least allow them the opportunity to apply for work permits and take care of their families, both here and abroad. DED also offers you the opportunity to do the right thing without suffering from negative political press. In 1997, the Clinton administration granted Haitians DED for one year.

There are some who fear that a policy granting any immigration status for Haitians will increase Coast Guard interdictions, but history proves this is untrue. In October 1998, when President Clinton enacted the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act (HRIFA), Coast Guard interdicting Haitians were reduced by 957 once the status was granted to Haitians in 1998. Haiti interdictions in 1998 were 1437 compared with just 480 in 1999.

As mentioned in my previous letter to you, these Haitian nationals have no viable country to return to - many acknowledge that Haiti is still in a state of chaos. The UN estimates that the lives of approximately 800,000 Haitians have been affected adversely by the hurricanes, with thousands displaced.


The impact of hurricanes and floods has been devastating to the Haitian economy and has resulted in an unprecedented level of suffering requiring emergency assistance for the people of Haiti. To send an additional 30,000 people back to a country that already has close to a million displaced individuals is un-American and inhumane and I could never support such an ill-advised and untimely Bush Administration policy.

At this time, I ask that you reconsider this policy before sending these refugees back to a country that has no economic means to support them.

TPS is a concession that has routinely been given to immigrants from different countries which were hit by natural disasters. This is inconsistent with the treatment given to Haitian immigrants despite the fact that economic and social conditions are worse, in addition to the reality that the country has not overcome the recent floods and hurricanes.

I respectfully urge that you grant DED to these Haitians nationals, so that these individuals can have the opportunity to support themselves in this country and send remittances back to the good and deserving neighbor of Haiti.

Sincerely,



CHARLES B. RANGEL, CHAIRMAN  
Committee on Ways and Means

CBR/lfh