

RESOLUTION NO. R-2010-47

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH MIAMI, FLORIDA, URGING PRESIDENT OBAMA AND DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY SECRETARY JANET NAPOLITANO TO PROMPTLY PAROLE INTO THE UNITED STATES ALL HAITIAN BENEFICIARIES OF APPROVED IMMIGRANT VISA PETITIONS AND PERMIT THEM TO LEGALLY WORK IN THE UNITED STATES, AND TO EXPEDITE CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF ALL PENDING BUT NOT YET APPROVED IMMIGRANT VISA PETITIONS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND FOR ALL OTHER PURPOSES.**

**WHEREAS**, on January 12, 2010, Haiti was devastated by an unprecedented 7.0 Richter Scale earthquake which has killed at least 250,000 people, left millions homeless and injured, and destroyed important Haitian government and international institutional resources and infrastructure; and

**WHEREAS**, Haiti is the western hemisphere's poorest nation and one of the poorest in the world; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 14, 2010, President Obama said that the disaster in Haiti "is one of those moments that call out for American's leadership"; and

**WHEREAS**, it is a policy of the United States to expeditiously assist Haiti's people and government to rebuild and recover from this catastrophe; and

**WHEREAS**, the Haitian diaspora is mainly in the United States and remits about \$2 billion dollars annually which is crucial to the welfare and survival of Haitians and to Haiti's welfare; and

**WHEREAS**, if allowed to work in the United States, the 55,000 beneficiaries would send remittances to Haiti supporting an estimated 550,000 thousand to one million persons in Haiti; and

**WHEREAS**, such capital flow is by far the largest source of foreign aid to Haiti and more important to Haitians per capita, than to any other nation in the world; and

**WHEREAS**, prior to the January 12, 2010 earthquake, the United States Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) had approved immigrant visa petitions for 55,000 Haitian beneficiaries now languishing unnecessarily in devastated Haiti until their priority dates become current, which is estimated to take anywhere from six to twelve years; and

**WHEREAS**, there are legal ways for the Obama Administration to promptly parole these 55,000 Haitian beneficiaries which are already approved for entry into the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, doing so would reunite families, provide for orderly migration and ease the burden on Haiti’s overwhelmed government without cost the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, Haiti’s prompt recovery and the survival of its democracy are of great national security to the United States given Haiti’s proximity and our large Haitian-American population; and

**WHEREAS**, paroling the 55,000 Haitian approved beneficiaries into the United States and allowing them to work is the simplest, most effective way to help Haiti recover from the catastrophe now being suffered; and

**WHEREAS**, DHS has humanitarian parole authority under the Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”) under Section 212(d)(5)(A) to expeditiously parole into the United States persons for “urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit”; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States has brought hundreds of thousands of Indochinese, Cuban, and Kosovo refugees, among others, into the United States when it was deemed it to be in the interests of national security; and

**WHEREAS**, although no congressional action is needed for DHS to exercise its humanitarian parole authority under the INA, the Haitian Emergency Life Protection Act of 2010 (“HELP Act”), S. 2998 and H.R. 4616, currently pending legislation, would grant V visas to bring these Haitian beneficiaries into the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, the Obama Administration has been urged to promptly parole the 55,000 Haitian beneficiaries of approved immigrant visa petitions by the editorial board of the

*Washington Post* in their editorial, "The U.S. should welcome Haitians in," published on January 29, 2010; and

**WHEREAS**, the editorial board of the *Miami Herald* followed suit in its lead editorial, "U.S. must lead in Haiti's recovery," published on March 22, 2010; and

**WHEREAS**, Secretary Napolitano was urged to parole the 55,000 beneficiaries by House or Representatives Chairpersons Conyers (Judiciary), Berman (Foreign Affairs), and Lofgren (immigration subcommittee), Representative Yvette Clark, South Florida's Republican Representatives Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Lincoln Diaz-Balart, and Mario Diaz-Balart, and by Representative Anh Cao of Louisiana; and

**WHEREAS**, the same relief was urged in a March 12, 2010 letter to Secretary Napolitano by 74 national and international organizations and eight other individuals; and

**WHEREAS**, the same relief was urged on February 2, 2010 in a *Huffington Post* op-ed by Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) Senior Vice President Mark Hetfield; and

**WHEREAS**, as President Reagan's Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Elliot Abrams, who also served as President George W. Bush's Deputy National Security Advisor, wrote in his *Washington Post* op-ed, "What Haiti Needs: A Haitian Diaspora," January 22, 2010, "A larger Haitian diaspora would be a far better base for the country's economic future than aid pledges" because their "remittances to Haiti would give its economy a huge and continuing jolt," and "One of the best ways to help Haiti is to allow some Haitians to move abroad" because "Migration would mean that Haiti needs to provide fewer hospital beds, schools, meals and jobs -- and migrants' remittances will be key to Haiti's economic recovery for decades to come," and President Obama "should be asking Congress ...to allow a significant increase in the number of Haitians legally admitted to the United States -- to several times the roughly 25,000 per year in the past decade. ... There are no panaceas for Haiti's recovery, but any sensible approach must include migration from the island. If the United States is committed to giving Haiti hope for the future, enlarging the Haitian diaspora is a surefire way to succeed"; and

**WHEREAS**, millions made homeless by the earthquake will suffer unnecessarily during Haiti's rain and hurricane seasons; thereby decreasing the window available for action; and

**WHEREAS**, immigrant visa petitions for a further 19,000 Haitian beneficiaries are pending but not yet been approved; and

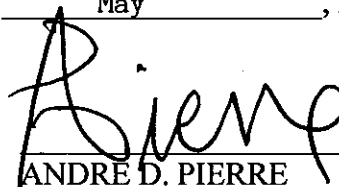
**WHEREAS**, helping neighbors and succoring the needy are in the highest traditions and values of the United States.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH MIAMI, FLORIDA:**

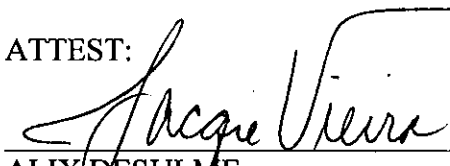
**Section 1.** The Mayor and City Council of the City of North Miami, Florida, hereby urge president Obama and Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano to promptly parole into the United States all Haitian beneficiaries of approved immigrant visa petitions and to permit them to legally work in the United States, and to expedite consideration and approval of all pending but not yet approved immigrant visa petitions.

**Section 2. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall be effective upon adoption.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by a 5-0 vote of the Mayor and City Council of the City of North Miami, Florida, this 11 day of May, 2010.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
ANDRE D. PIERRE  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
ALIX DESULME  
CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND  
LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
V. LYNN WHITFIELD  
CITY ATTORNEY

SPONSORED BY: MAYOR ANDRE D. PIERRE

Moved by: Councilman Blynn

Seconded by: Vice Mayor Marcellus

**Vote:**

|                                    |          |       |                 |      |
|------------------------------------|----------|-------|-----------------|------|
| Mayor Andre D. Pierre              | <u>X</u> | (Yes) | <u>        </u> | (No) |
| Vice Mayor Jean Rodrigue Marcellus | <u>X</u> | (Yes) | <u>        </u> | (No) |
| Councilperson Michael R. Blynn     | <u>X</u> | (Yes) | <u>        </u> | (No) |
| Councilperson Scott Galvin         | <u>X</u> | (Yes) | <u>        </u> | (No) |
| Councilperson Marie Erlande Steril | <u>X</u> | (Yes) | <u>        </u> | (No) |