

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE GENERAL COURT
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

November 2, 2011

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary, United States Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano,

As members of the Massachusetts State Legislature and the Black and Latino Legislative Caucus, we write to you to respectfully request your support in expanding humanitarian parole for Haitians with pending family-based visa petitions.


As representatives of the state containing the third largest population of Haitians and Haitian Americans, we are deeply concerned about the precarious status of many Haitian children, elders and families as they wait in Haiti to be reunited with their families in the United States. As you know, for many, the conditions in Haiti since the devastating earthquake of 2010 remain unstable and even dangerous. Establishing a Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program (HFRPP), modeled after the Cuban Family Reunification Parole Program, would alleviate this crisis by simply allowing Haitians already approved for visas to wait for them in the United States with their families rather than in Haiti.


In addition to this proposed program's merits on a humanitarian level, it also has economic benefits. Allowing Haitians to wait for their visas within the U.S. would allow them the opportunity to be authorized for employment. This would benefit both the U.S. and Haitian economies for it would enable Haitians to become productive members of their local communities in the U.S. while also sending more remittances home to Haiti to foster economic development with greater speed. As the Governor of Massachusetts, Deval Patrick, stated in his recent letter to you, "We benefit from all of the varied contributions that our Haitian neighbors make to strengthen our Commonwealth." In addition to the Governor, members of the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation have also expressed support for an updated parole program. Haiti has a long history of mutually beneficial alliance with the United States dating back to the American Revolution, and adopting a HFRPP would serve to strengthen that historic partnership.


We would like to thank you for attention to this important matter and for all of your work on behalf of Haitians. We especially appreciate the Obama Administration's decision


to extend Temporary Protected Status for Haitians through January 2012, and hope that the administration will continue its commitment to Haiti.

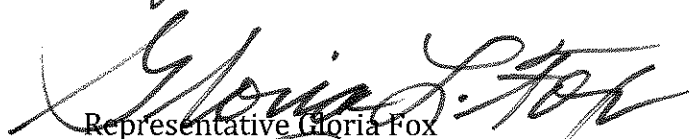
Sincerely,



Representative Linda Dorcena Forry
12th Suffolk District



Representative Benjamin Swan
11th Hampden District



Representative Cheryl Coakley-Rivera
10th Hampden District


Representative Marcos Devers
16th Essex District


Representative Gloria Fox
7th Suffolk District


Representative Carlos Henriquez
5th Suffolk District


Representative Russell Holmes
6th Suffolk District


Representative Jeffrey Sanchez
15th Suffolk District