

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 29, 2013

Danilo Medina Sánchez
President of the Dominican Republic
Ministerio de la Presidencia
Palacio Nacional de la Presidencia
Av. México Esq. Doctor Delgado
Distrito Nacional, República Dominicana

Dear President Medina:

As members of the United States House of Representatives, with noted constituencies of Caribbean descent, we write to you in order to express our deep concern regarding the status of more than 240,000 Dominicans who are under threat of becoming stateless after the *Tribunal Constitucional's* recent decision.

For over a generation the international community has agreed that governments have a duty to prevent statelessness. The right to nationality is fundamental and a gateway to almost all other human rights and government protections. Without citizenship one cannot access basic services such as education or health care, let alone find employment or exercise any number of political rights.

While we recognize the ability of any government to regulate access to nationality, any such domestic regulation must still conform to universally accepted obligations of non-discrimination, due process, and a government's duty to prevent statelessness. The decision of the *Tribunal Constitucional* completely disregards these fundamental principles of rule of law and human rights by retroactively redefining the citizenship criteria for people born in the country since 1929. Now, under this arbitrary and discriminatory ruling those born to foreign parents since 1929 – even those who had previously been issued valid Dominican birth certificates and whose families have lived as Dominican citizens for multiple generations – could have their citizenship revoked. While most of those affected are of Haitian descent, the majority does not have Haitian citizenship and will be left stateless.

If implemented by your government, this decision by the *Tribunal Constitucional* could result in an unprecedented humanitarian crisis and seriously threaten regional stability. In light of this, we urge you to take all necessary steps to stay the tide of the denationalization campaign exemplified by the *Tribunal Constitucional*, and together we call for the protection of the thousands of Dominicans currently at risk of becoming stateless.

Sincerely,



Joseph P. Kennedy, III
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



Karen Bass
Member of Congress



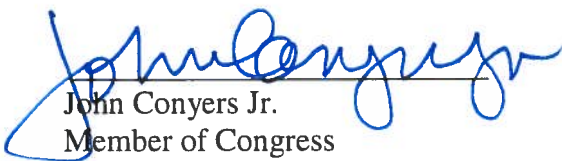
Ami Bera
Member of Congress



Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



John Conyers Jr.
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress



Marcia L. Fudge
Member of Congress



Joe Garcia
Member of Congress



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Nita M. Lowey
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



James P. Moran
Member of Congress



Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress