



**National Haitian-American Elected Officials Network  
(NHAEON)**

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Honorable President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
2600 Pennsylvania Ave  
Washington, DC

Ms. Elaine C. Duke, Acting Secretary  
Homeland Security  
2311 Massachusetts Ave  
NW Washington, DC 20008

**RE: Requesting an 18-month Extension of TPS for Haitian Beneficiaries and an Immediate Meeting to Discuss Future Collaboration Relative to Haiti**

Dear President Trump and Acting Secretary Duke:

We are writing to request an extension of the TPS for Haitian beneficiaries and an immediate meeting to discuss the current plight of Haiti, its inability to absorb the return of the 46,558 Haitian beneficiaries of Temporary Protective Status (TPS) and future collaboration with your administration.

The Haitian-American Elected Officials Network (NHAEON) is composed of US State, County, and Local government elected officials of Haitian descent from eleven (11) U.S. states. As elected officials, we interface directly with beneficiaries of TPS who look to us for leadership during hard times such as this.

Ending TPS for these nationals would result in significant monetary reduction to Social Security and Medicare contributions, deplete U.S. business workforce, and cost taxpayers billions to deport these individuals. A recent letter dated October 4, 2017 addressed to DHS from the Haitian Ambassador to the US, Paul Altidor, states in pertinent part that Haitian TPS recipients have proven, in a large part, exemplary law-abiding residents posing no threat to US National Security and have made significant economic contributions to their communities. These salient points have also been acknowledged publicly by Congressional leaders, from both Democrats and Republicans, as well as Mayors, Governors, and business leaders. So, their presence adds value to the social fabric of our society.

Aside for this social reason, from a regulatory perspective, the request for this 18 months extension is even more convincing. According to DHS regulations, a country is designated for TPS due to **“conditions in the country that temporarily prevent the nationals from returning safely, or in certain circumstances, where**

**the country is unable to handle the return of its nationals adequately.”** The regulation further stated that USCIS may grant TPS to designated eligible nationals who are already in the United States and have demonstrated that their country of origin is subjected to the following temporary conditions:

- Ongoing armed conflict (such as civil war);
- **An environmental disaster (such as earthquake or hurricane), or an epidemic**
- Other extraordinary and temporary conditions

Emphasis added.

Based on the recorded environmental disasters and documented epidemic in Haiti after the January 12, 2010 earthquake and because Haiti has remained incapable of absorbing the return of its nationals, DHS has designated Haiti for TPS with several subsequent extensions due to its extraordinary and temporary conditions that remain persistent.

To best justify granting an 18-month extension for TPS please accept this thumbnail sketch of Haiti's inability to handle the return of its national due to conditions before and after the January 12, 2010 earthquake.

### **HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF HAITI'S REALITY BEFORE THE JANUARY 12, 2010 EARTHQUAKE:**

- Haiti was 145th of 169 countries in the UN Human Development Index, which is the lowest in the Western Hemisphere;
- More than 70% of people in Haiti were living on less than \$US2 per day;
- 86% of people in Port-au-Prince were living in slum conditions - mostly tightly-packed, poorly-built, concrete buildings;
- 80% of education in Haiti was provided in often poor-quality private schools, the state system generally provided better education but did not provide enough places; and
- Half of the population in Port-au-Prince had no access to latrines and only one-third had access to tap water.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE JANUARY 12<sup>th</sup> 2010 EARTHQUAKE**

- 7.0 Magnitude Quake struck near Port-au-Prince;
- 3,500,000 people were affected by the earthquake;
- 220,000 to 300,000 people are estimated to have died;
- 300,000+ people were injured;
- Over 188,383 houses were badly damaged and 105,000 were destroyed by the earthquake (293,383 in total), 1.5m people became homeless;
- After the quake there were 19 million cubic meters of rubble and debris in Port-au-Prince – enough to fill a line of shipping containers stretching end to end from London to Beirut;
- 4,000 schools were damaged or destroyed;
- 25% of civil servants in Port-au-Prince died;
- 60% of Government and administrative buildings, 80% of schools in Port-au-Prince and 60% of schools in the South and West Departments were destroyed or damaged;
- Over 600,000 people left their home area in Port-au-Prince and mostly stayed with host families; and
- \$14 billions in damages according to the Inter-American Development bank.

· At its peak, one and a half million people were living in camps including over 100,000 at critical risk from storms and flooding.

With this as a backdrop, The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) initially granted TPS to Haitian nationals in 2010 with several subsequent extensions.

Even as recently as May 24, 2017, this administration has recognized the undeniable necessity for such an extension when stated that **“permitting Haitian nationals to continue residing temporarily in the U.S. is not contrary to the national interest of the United States.”** To grant such an extension, DHS took into consideration the abject country conditions in Haiti, which have worsened since the January 12, 2010 earthquake. The record is replete with these conditions, such as the April 2010 Cholera outbreak that thus far claimed 9,200 people and infected over 250,000. Moreover, on October 4, 2016, Hurricane Matthew caused approximately 1,000 deaths, destroyed 95% of the homes, uprooted crops, and vanished livestock while the dead carcasses floated in waterways already infected with Cholera. According to the Haitian aid group, CARE, the estimate of economic damage done by Hurricane Matthew is as high as \$1 billion, which is 11.4% of the country's \$8.88 billion Gross Domestic Product. Lastly, just a few months ago, Haiti suffered yet another set of natural disasters with Hurricanes Irma and Maria destroying the lion's share of the country's agriculture, housing and infrastructure.

Please note that 1/3 of Haiti's GDP comes from remittances from the Diaspora. Individuals who can no longer work to send money back to their families will be forced to return to a country that cannot absorb them without undue hardships to their well being and welfare. With the absence of any significant improvement in Haiti to handle their return, sending these 46,558 to Haiti will only add to Haiti's current humanitarian disaster.

To facilitate this most important meeting relative to TPS and beyond, please respond with available dates, accordingly.

Thank you for living up to the creed that makes America great, which states in part “[w]e hold this truth to be self-evident that all men are created equal.”

Sincerely yours,

National Haitian American Elected Officials Network (NHAEON)

### **Members of NHAEON**

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Councilman David Reddick, City of Anniston, AL

#### **Florida**

State Senator Daphne Campbell, District 38, FL

State Representative Al Jacquet, District 87, FL

Commissioner Victoria Siplin, Orange County, FL

Commissioner Jean Monestime, Miami-Dade, FL

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Councilman Alix Desulme, North Miami, FL

Councilman Philippe Bien-Aime, North Miami, FL

Commissioner Frantz Pierre, City of North Miami Beach, FL

Commissioner Christina Romelus, Boynton Beach, FL

Commissioner Gabriel Edmond, South Miami, FL

Commissioner Darline Riggs, Miramar, FL

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City Clerk Michael Etienne, North Miami, FL

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Committeewoman Michele Delisfort, Union, NJ

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School Board Member Charlene Bathelus, Elizabeth, NJ

School Board Member, Luis Antilu, Irvington NJ

School Board Member Joseph Sylvain, Irvington, NJ

School Board Betrand Louis, Spotwood, NJ

School Board Member Sheenaider Guillaume, NJ

County Committee Leader Joseph Maklhandal Champagne , South Toms River, NJ

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Assemblywoman Rodneyse Bichotte, Brooklyn, NY

Assemblywoman Kimberly Jean-Pierre, Suffolk, NY

Assemblyman Clyde Vanel, Queens Village, NY

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County Legislator Carrie Solages, Valley Stream, NY

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