

January, said that out of 2,107 SSI recipients investigated, 966 persons were not U.S. citizens.

Recent welfare reforms clarify that SSI is intended for U.S. citizens, with few exceptions for non-citizens.

The inspector general's report recommended more training in how to spot nonresidents "before they receive SSI."

program to other federal and state assistance programs such as food stamps and Medicaid.

Last year, SSA officials started the Southwest Tactical Operations Plan (STOP) in El Paso to investigate residency fraud.

STOP targeted two ZIP codes in El Paso, a city of 652,000 across the Rio Grande River from Ciudad Juarez, a Mexican city with a population of 1.2 million.

mailboxes to receive benefits checks. The three most popular services were within walking distance of the Mexican border.

The probe was started because SSA staff in El Paso had complained of "a lot of [residency] abuse," the report said. One staff member told an investigator about an SSI recipient who "comes to pick up his check, stays three days, then goes back" to Ciudad Juarez.

# Haitians' immigration status may be political Pandora's box for officials

By Sean Scully  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Congress soon will return to a politically touchy question left unanswered in the 1996 immigration law — whether to allow tens of thousands of Haitian refugees to stay in the United States.

The Haitians, along with Hondurans, were left out of last year's sweeping amnesty granted to Nicaraguan and Cuban refugees, exempting them from the tough deportation rules created in 1996. Also last year, Congress granted a partial reprieve to El Salvadorans and Guatemalans, but left all other groups subject to the new rules.

"This is a fair country, we shouldn't have a double standard," said Rep. Carrie P. Meek, Florida Democrat and leader of the effort to bring Haitians and others under the amnesty.

But there is a formidable force standing in the Haitians' path: Rep. Lamar Smith, Texas Republican and chairman of the immigration and claims subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee.

Mr. Smith grudgingly accepted the amnesty for Nicaraguans and Cubans but is in no mood to accept further exemptions.

"The Haitians have been treated very generously by the immigration law," a committee spokesman said. Historically, as a percentage of the nation's population, more people from Haiti have been admitted to the United States as refugees than from any other country, he said.

Although not a high-profile issue with the public, the debate over the Haitians threatens to expose some raw spots in Congress.

While they are reluctant to say so too forcefully — for fear of jeopardizing their chance of expanding the amnesty — black legislators complain that the Haitians are being mistreated because they are black.

"I would like not to think that anything is racial in this colorblind society we are being asked to live



Rep. Lamar Smith

in," said Rep. Melvin Watt, North Carolina Democrat, the ranking Democrat on the immigration and claims subcommittee, "but I haven't been able to find any rational basis for the distinctions that are being made."

About 95 percent of Haiti's 6.6 million residents are black. Cuba and most Central American nations have relatively few blacks, generally around 10 percent, although about half of Cuba's population is racially mixed.

Mr. Smith and supporters of the amnesty for Nicaraguans and Cubans say those refugees are a special case: They were fleeing Communist regimes and sometimes were even active in fighting the Communists.

"It was a consideration of the circumstances, not anything racial or anything political," one Republican staff member said.

But if it isn't racial, it may be political.

Since the 1960s, 90 percent of black voters have supported Democrats. Republicans, meanwhile, fear they are losing support in the large Hispanic community be-

cause of their stands on immigration.

Therefore, some congressional staff say, the Republican-controlled Congress would see little advantage in admitting the black Haitians, who could eventually apply to become voting citizens. And by helping the Central Americans, the GOP could shore up support among Hispanics.

Such demographic calculations on the part of Republicans may be "just an unintended consequence" of pragmatic politics, one Democratic aide said.

Last year's amnesty allows Nicaraguans and Cubans who lived in the United States before December 1995 to remain as legal residents. It allows Salvadorans, Guatemalans and citizens of Eastern European nations who were in the United States by late 1991 to be treated under the older, more lenient refugee rules.

It's not clear how many Haitians would be covered by an amnesty. The INS estimates there are as many as 40,000 Haitian refugees in the United States, although it admits the estimate is loose at best. Mr. Smith's office says there could be 200,000.

An estimated 300,000 Cubans and Nicaraguans were covered by last year's amnesty.

The fate of the Haitian amnesty is uncertain. There seems to be bipartisan support for it in the Senate, where Sen. Spencer Abraham, Michigan Republican and chairman of the immigration subcommittee, favors Democrat-sponsored bills that extend the amnesty beyond just Nicaraguans and Cubans.

"My feeling was that all these groups should have been treated the same way," he said, although he firmly rejected the notion that the difference was based on race.

In the House, the fate is less clear. The key will be Speaker Newt Gingrich, Georgia Republican, and Majority Leader Dick Armey, Texas Republican, who have yet to speak out on the matter.

The Washington Times  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1998

File  
Immigrant  
Haitians

Julie  
Harris

Haitians

Immigrant

Haitians

Notes from mtg 5.

Martina  
in Spri - date?

2/5/98

## Haitians

Mardi 5<sup>th</sup>: mark-up

Strategies for working the legislation

Scope of class

Type of relief requested

Implementation of DET

→ copy of memo  
re: concerns w/ implementation (?)

Few Haitians will benefit  
if relief offered is less than green cards  
(residence)

① history  
of discrim

② difficult  
caselaw

③ EOIR is  
already confused

Vast # of Haitians were paroled in, so not even  
eligible for suspension of deportation

Bifurcate the class (?)

passed "credible fear"  
threshold

Any way to classify Haitians as refugees (?)  
(as we did w/ Cubans)

Parolees

→ Haitians w/ special status

→ not eligible for suspension

May want Nicaraguan-type amnesty  
for Haitian parolees.

- ① Helpful to groups to know where WH stands on leg.
  - ② Quietly work it (?)
  - ③ We should not consider less than what is in Senate bill
- children (?) — on @ 4 the class size

→ Livingston letter to Pres. re: DED for Hondurans

Not dead in Senate for permanent relief (green cards) for parolee Haitians

11,000 out of 40,000 were found to have credible asylum claim

[\* WH needs to figure out where we need to end up ]

[ National Forum is doing a press event @ end of the month to show Rep. support for relief for Haitians ]

Rick Shwartz  
endorsed by Peter

Strategy could be to put R's up front (publically), but don't want to questi where we are

~~Apple~~

Implementation

biggest problem

work authority

~~Burden on whether to close~~

Mailing to 4-5,000 individuals who may be eligible for DED to get admin. closure

Trial attys block motions to close (?)

Any info on whether asylum offices have been instructed to close the cases (?)

# National Immigration Forum

---

To: CYNTHIA RICE  
Company : CYNTHIA RICE  
Fax Number : 202-456-7431  
Phone Number :

From : Angela Kelley & Debra Dixon  
Fax Number : 202-544-1905  
Phone Number 202-544-0004

Time Sent : Wednesday, Sep 16, 1998 06:41PM  
Pages : 10  
Description : 1-

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Attached are press statements and an article from a press conference yesterday with members of the Congressional Black Caucus calling for passage of legislation that would provide relief for Haitian refugees.

As you know, the legislation is part of the Treasury Postal appropriations bill. Conferees were named today and action is expected in the very near future.

If you have any questions please call Angela Kelley at 2020-544-0004 ext. #19 or Debra Dixon at ext. #13.

# **PRESS CONFERENCE**

## **AFRICAN-AMERICAN LEADERS DEMAND FAIR TREATMENT OF HAITIAN REFUGEES**

**Tuesday September 15, 1998, 11:00 am  
Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2237**

### **Participants**

---

**Moderator: Jocelyn McCalla, Executive Director,  
National Coalition for Haitian Rights**

**Rep. John Conyers (D-MI)**

**Rep. Carrie Meek (D-FL)**

**Rep. Corrine Brown (D-FL)**

**Rep. Juanita Millender-McDonald (D-CA)**

**Rep. Shella Jackson Lee (D-TX)**

**Rep. Gregory Meeks (D-NY)**

**Del. Donna Christian-Green (D-Delegate-Virgin Islands)**

**Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL)**

**Wade Henderson, President, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights**

**Pierre Absalon, Haitian affected by the legislation**

from the office of:

Fourteenth District, Michigan

# Congressman John Conyers, Jr.

Ranking Member, House Judiciary Committee

Dean of the Congressional Black Caucus

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 15, 1998

Contact: Carl LeVan  
(202) 225-5126

## **Rep. John Conyers Pledges "Zero Tolerance" for Immigration Double Standards; Continues Fight for Haitian Refugee and Immigration Fairness Act**

I am delighted to be here with my colleagues Carrie Meek, Donna Christian-Green, Gregory Meeks, and Corrine Brown. It's also great to be collaborating with Jocelyn McCalla from the National Coalition for Haitian Rights and Wade Henderson from the National Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. I want to extend special recognition to Pierre Absalon, a Haitian parolee who came down here all the way from New York to share his story and remind us that how worthy the refugees in question truly are. Thank you for coming, Mr. Absalon. Finally, I want to extend my gratitude to the National Immigration Forum, the Equal Treatment Coalition and the many organizations and individuals who have been tirelessly working to protect the rights of Haitian immigrants with this legislation.

Thanks to the diligence of Senators Bob Graham and Carol Mosely-Braun we took a recent step forward in the Senate toward protecting Haitian refugees. We're not going to allow the double standard being set by the chairman of the House Subcommittee on Immigration to prevail. This group pledges zero tolerance and demands fairness.

When a September 1991 *coup d'etat* overthrew Haiti's democratically elected government, the United States made a commitment to thousands of orphans of democracy who fled Haiti by boat. Over 40,000 Haitians were interviewed at Guantanamo Bay and approximately 10,000 Haitians met a "credible fear" asylum standard and were paroled into the United States by the Attorney General. Thus this group of Haitians is legally in the country but their status is only temporary. Thanks to cooperation by the Department of Justice, they have regularly received an extension of that status, but the situation has left them in an intolerable limbo for several years. I won't allow us to break our promises and abandon these people now.

That's why I introduced H.R. 3049, a bi-partisan bill to resolve the parolee status problem by granting legal permanent residency status to those who came through Guantanamo Bay. It will also permit Haitian asylees who are not otherwise covered by the bill to seek similar relief. The companion legislation, contained in the Treasury-Postal Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 1999, passed the Senate 91 - 5 on September 3.

The Haitians covered by the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act are entitled to this parity not only because they came to the United States at the invitation of the Attorney General, but also because similarly situated nationalities have received a blanket adjustment in their status. Most notably, Nicaraguans and many Cubans received full amnesty when the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act became law in November. Why should these groups get special treatment? It's time to remedy the situation.

I am not going to abandon Haiti and I will not allow a duplicitous refugee policy to prevail. In the last year alone I have been to Haiti three times. During those congressional delegations which I chaired, we solicited the views of Haitians with regard to their political crisis, and shared with them the dramas of our own representative government. Now is time to show them that we have our own house in order. Without passage of this legislation for Haitian refugees, I believe we will fail to convey to this nascent democracy to the South that our own democratic processes produce fair and just solutions.

I am pleased to convey this message today to the members of the conference committee for Treasury-Postal Appropriations and I will continue to work closely with you all to convey to them the urgent nature of this legislation.

# # #

**MEDIA INFORMATION****Congresswoman****— Sheila Jackson Lee****18th District — Texas****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
SEPTEMBER 15, 1998****CONTACT: SCOTT SOUTHWARD  
(202) 225-3816****CONGRESSWOMAN JACKSON LEE URGES CONGRESS TO  
PASS LEGISLATION PROTECTING HAITIAN REFUGEES**

**Houston --** At a press conference today, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Houston) urged the U.S. House to enact legislation to protect Haitian refugees who fled to the United States to avoid persecution.

"Many of the men, women, and children who were forced to flee this small island country faced persecution because they or their close family members tried to participate in democratic elections," says Jackson Lee. "They, and others liked them, suffered at the hands of regimes whose police, military and paramilitary forces engaged in the brutal killings or torture of its citizens."

Congresswoman Jackson Lee is a cosponsor of H.R. 3033, the Haitian Refugee and Immigration Fairness Act, which provides for the permanent resident status adjustment of certain Haitian nationals (and their spouses and children) who were brought into the United States or filed for amnesty after fleeing their country.

According to estimates made by the INS, the number of Haitians already in the United States that would benefit from this legislation is fewer than 45,000. Identical language passed the full Senate as an amendment to the Senate Treasury/Postal appropriations bill.

"It is in our national interest to allow Haiti's fragile democracy to take hold. That job will be much more difficult should thousands of individuals be forced to return to Haiti by the U.S. These people may again become the targets of political violence, spawning another episode of political and social disorder," concluded Jackson Lee.

# # #





economic hardships were subjected to the highest degree of political hypocrisy and racism.

Many in Congress justified the exclusion of Haitian refugees on the grounds that Haitians were not escaping a Communist nation or they claimed that Haitian refugees fled because of economic hardships.

The Congressional Black Caucus Members are committed to helping to gain parity for Haitian refugees. We support the strong bipartisan support the bill received in the Senate and we will press the Conference Committee to keep this provision in the FY 99 Treasury-Postal Appropriations bill.

**TRANSAFRICA**

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Washington, D.C. 20009

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Dr. Pearl Robinson  
Dr. James Turner  
The Hon. Maxine Waters

Randall Robinson  
President

August 28, 1998

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd  
SH-311 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Byrd:

We are writing in reference to the upcoming conference on the fiscal year 1999 Treasury, Postal, and General Government Appropriations bill.

Last year, the Congress passed a measure, P.L. 105-100, which offered United States resident alien status to Central Americans who, like Haitians, established new lives in the United States years ago, after fleeing political turmoil in their homelands.

P.L. 105-100 contained a major oversight which Senator Bob Graham, (D-FL) sought to correct in S. 1504 this year. Last year's bill left Haitians (who came to the United States under the same circumstances as the Central Americans) in a state of limbo, and indeed leaves them vulnerable to deportation. S. 1504 would ensure that Haitians who established new lives in the United States years ago would be treated as Central Americans, who came here under similar circumstances, have been under P.L. 105-100.

S. 1504 passed the Senate Subcommittee on Immigration, the Senate Judiciary Committee, and was also passed as an amendment to the fiscal year 1999 Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations bill. We urge your active involvement to ensure that this Senate language is retained during the upcoming conference, since the House version of the bill is silent on this issue.

This amendment speaks to the time-honored American values of fairness and equity. We seek your leadership to ensure that the House recede to the Senate on this issue.

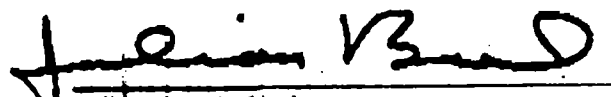
August 28, 1998  
Page 2

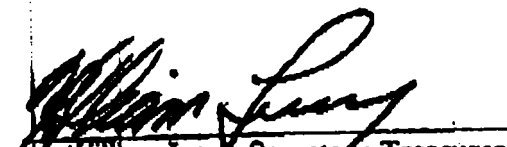
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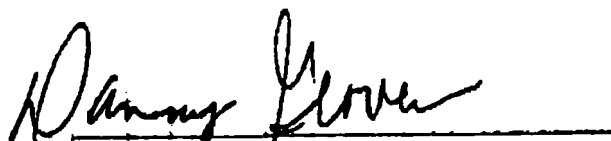
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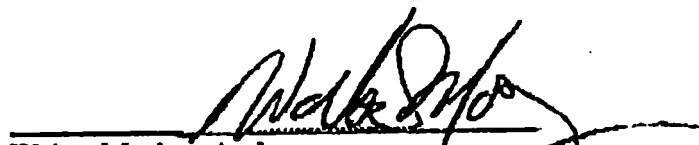
  
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TransAfrica

  
The Honorable Maxine Waters  
United States House of Representatives

  
Julian Bond, Chairman  
NAACP National Board of Directors

  
William Lucy, Secretary-Treasurer  
AFSCME

  
Danny Glover, Actor

  
Walter Mosley, Author

yellowpages@herald.com

click here!

Let your mouse do the clicking

Published Wednesday, September 16, 1998, in the Miami Herald

## Bush endorses Graham's proposed visa break for Haitians

By FRANK DAVIES  
Herald Staff Writer

WASHINGTON -- A bipartisan effort to protect the rights of Haitian refugees received a boost Tuesday from GOP gubernatorial candidate Jeb Bush.

At the same time, immigration rights leaders in Washington and members of the Congressional Black Caucus pleaded that the issue not be drowned out by the Clinton scandal or lost in confusion in the waning days of Congress.

Bush urged House Speaker Newt Gingrich to push for passage of legislation to take about 30,000 refugees out of legal limbo by allowing Attorney General Janet Reno to grant them status as permanent residents. Most live in South Florida and New York.

Lt. Gov. Buddy MacKay, the Democratic candidate for governor, has long supported the measure, a spokeswoman said Tuesday.

The Haitian refugees include those who fled Haiti six years ago, were rescued at sea, came through the Guantanamo refugee center in Cuba and were found to have a credible fear of persecution. Haitians with longstanding asylum applications also would be eligible.

Last year Haitians were omitted in similar legislation that protected about 150,000 Nicaraguans and 5,000 Cubans -- an omission that rankled human rights groups and some Florida leaders. President Clinton provided a one-year protection from deportation that expires Dec. 22.

Sen. Bob Graham, D-Fla., was able to attach the refugee measure to an appropriations bill that passed the Senate, but the House version omits the Haitian provision.

Gingrich is expected to name House members today to a conference committee to reconcile differences in the bills. A coalition of civil rights and immigration advocacy groups, along with Bush, urged the House not to forget the Haitians in the rush to finish work before leaving Oct. 9.

"This is primarily a matter of fairness and equal justice, not immigration," Bush wrote Gingrich, "and your voice will be important in guiding the deliberations of conference committee members."

Black Caucus members such as Carrie Meek, a Miami Democrat, and John Conyers, a veteran Detroit Democrat, have made the Haitian refugee bill a legislative priority. But Bush, as a prominent Republican, has the leverage to make a difference as the GOP-controlled Congress finishes its work in the next three weeks.

"It's a big, big help," said Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Miami Republican who also supports the measure, when she learned of Bush's letter.

At a press conference sponsored by the National Immigration Forum, which supports Haitian refugees' rights, a young Haitian who fled on a leaky boat in 1991 described his experience and his dreams for the future.

Pierre Absalon, 25, who lives in New York, was detained at Guantanamo and then allowed into the United States to apply for asylum. If he gets legal residency, he wants to attend college and join the U.S. Navy.

"The Navy appeals to me because I was rescued at sea, and given a second chance at life," Absalon said.



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