

Fairness for Haitian Refugees

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Divider Title: 1

RELIEF FROM DEPORTATION FOR HAITIAN REFUGEES

For decades prior to 1990, Haiti was ruled by repressive dictatorships. Haiti's rulers violently persecuted dissidents and those suspected of associating with them. During this time, a number of men, women, and children, fleeing the persecution, made their way to the United States in search of freedom and safety.

In 1990, the Haitian people elected a popular leader whose administration, just seven months after taking power, was violently overthrown in a military coup. Coup leaders and their supporters plunged the nation into a state of chaos, as thousands of individuals who supported the democratic government were subject to imprisonment, torture, rape, and even extra-judicial killings.

In fear of persecution, thousands of Haitians fled by boat in search of refuge. Many were intercepted on the high seas by the U.S. Coast Guard and Navy and, after convincing authorities they had a "credible fear of persecution," were eventually brought to the United States to pursue claims for asylum.

THE SITUATION IN HAITI CONTINUES TO BE DANGEROUS AND UNSTABLE

In 1994, the U.S. military intervened to restore the democratically elected government of Haiti, and to bring the political violence to a halt. By and large, our intervention restored a semblance of order, and gave the supporters of democracy hope for their country. The number of people attempting to flee the island dramatically dropped.

Nevertheless, four years later, democracy in Haiti remains extremely fragile. Tensions remain high between supporters of democratic government and supporters of past dictatorships—many of whom were responsible for carrying out atrocities for which they have never been brought to justice. The mass deportation from the U.S. of thousands of persons who would be perceived as enemies of past rulers might well set off another era of instability, negating the years of effort by the U.S. and the U.N. to nurture democracy in Haiti. It is unclear whether the police force—newly trained by U.N. Peacekeepers—would be up to the task of maintaining order once refugees arrived from the U.S.

What is clear is that the lives of many Haitian refugees now in exile here would be placed in danger. Most of their former persecutors are still at large. Indeed, Amnesty International has recently reported that the situation in Haiti was not only unstable but had worsened in recent months. According to Amnesty International, "[a]nyone returning to Haiti cannot be assured that they will be protected by the existing Haitian justice system..."

Meanwhile, in the intervening years since the restoration of Haiti's democratically elected government, those who were permitted to come here have built lives in the United States. They have married, had children, bought homes, started businesses, and otherwise enriched the American communities into which they have settled. Having been brought to the U.S. and given temporary protection from deportation, these people live and remain here today in a legal limbo. Many live in constant fear that some change in policy will result in their sudden removal from the U. S. Indeed, changes in policy and law toward the end of 1997 both restricted rights Haitians had previously enjoyed, while at the same time providing appropriate relief to similarly-situated people.

LEGISLATION IN THE 105TH CONGRESS

In 1997, Congress enacted the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA), legislation providing relief from deportation to certain nationals of Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Cuba, and specified Eastern European nations. Like the Haitian refugees, the refugees from these countries had fled persecution in their home countries and came to the United States in search of safety and freedom. During the earlier part of this decade, they all received some form of temporary protection from deportation.

Congress enacted this legislation in part because both the Administration and Congress were concerned that forcing these nationals to leave the United States at this time could destabilize the fragile democracies emerging in these countries. In addition, Congress recognized that the refugees from these countries had, over the years, built equities here and deserved an opportunity to remain in this country.

There was an effort by some members of Congress to include Haitians who were in a similar situation as the Central Americans and Cubans covered by NACARA. That effort, in the last days of the congressional session, was unsuccessful. As a result, separate legislation has been introduced for consideration in this session of Congress.

A bipartisan group of Senators—Bob Graham (D-FL), Connie Mack (R-FL), Spencer Abraham (R-MI), Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA), Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), Carol Moseley-Braun (D-IL), Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY), John Kerry (D-MA), and Richard Durbin (D-IL)—have co-sponsored S. 1504, legislation to provide immigration relief to deserving Haitian nationals who are here in the United States. An identical bipartisan bill, H.R. 3049, was introduced in the House of Representatives by Representatives John Conyers (D-MI), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), and Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-FL). Representative Carrie Meek (D-FL) introduced a similar bill, H.R. 3033.

S. 1504 and H.R. 3049 would permit the Attorney General to adjust the status of certain Haitian nationals to that of Lawful Permanent Resident. Haitians who would be covered by the bills include those who were temporarily protected on the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, naval base, and were found to have a credible fear of persecution. Haitians with long-standing asylum applications also would be eligible. S. 1504 also covers a specific class of children. H.R. 3033 would provide similar relief for a somewhat larger class of Haitian nationals. While the specific provisions of S. 1504/H.R. 3049 differ in some respects from the provisions of H.R. 3033, these different pieces of legislation share a similar goal: to extend fairness to and provide relief for Haitians refugees who sought U.S. protection from persecution in Haiti, and who have been living in the U.S. with the permission of our government.

"The Haitian Refugee and Immigration Fairness Act" has been introduced in both the House of Representatives and the Senate to provide permanent relief for these deserving refugees. The legislation passed the Senate Judiciary Committee by voice vote, and identical language has passed the full Senate as an amendment to the Treasury/Postal appropriations bill (HR 4104). While this legislation is being considered, the Administration has taken action to provide temporary administrative relief from deportation until December 22, 1998, for Haitian nationals who might ultimately be protected by the legislation.

PRECEDENT FOR CONGRESSIONAL ACTION

S. 1504/H.R. 3049 and H.R. 3033 would extend the same protection to a relatively small group of Haitians that was extended to some of the beneficiaries of the Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act. Without new legislation, these Haitians face deportation or at best an uncertain situation as a result of changing U.S. policy and the complexities of immigration law.

In addition to the legislation passed last year for Central Americans, Cubans, and Eastern Europeans, there is ample precedent for Congress' enactment of legislation adjusting the status of refugee-like populations to that of Lawful Permanent Resident. In all, Congress has enacted similar relief for other populations on at least nine occasions since the late 1950's. For instance, Chinese students fleeing a repressive government regime found protection and relief through the Chinese Student Protection Act of 1992. Poles and Hungarians having fled similar situations found their plight resolved in the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, enacted in 1996.

Congress should act promptly to enact legislation which provides fairness and equity for these refugees, who fled the tyranny and persecution in Haiti, were given temporary protections in the U.S., and who have subsequently contributed greatly to their adopted communities.

AdTI Issue Brief #158
January 28, 1998

Relief for Haitians: A Matter of Fairness
Philip Peters, Senior Fellow

Summary

Congress granted relief last year to about 150,000 Nicaraguans and 250,000 Salvadorans and Guatemalans who faced deportation as a result of the 1996 immigration law. These people had fled the Central American conflicts of the 1980's, reached the United States, and received "temporary protected status" or other non-immigrant status, but were not classified as immigrants or refugees. A much smaller number of Haitians are in an analogous situation and deserve the same treatment: an offer of legal permanent residence for those in good standing in their communities. This action would be in keeping with decades of precedent. Throughout the postwar era, Congress has given immigrant status to similarly situated groups from Russia, Eastern Europe, Cuba, China, and Indochina. Similar action for the Haitians would serve the foreign policy interest of the U.S., and it is an appropriate humanitarian gesture to immigrants who now have roots in American communities, and could face persecution if returned to Haiti.

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Relief for Haitians: A Matter of Fairness

Philip Peters, Senior Fellow

Congress is considering legislation to prevent the deportation of Haitians who entered the U.S. under the Attorney General's parole authority before December 31, 1995. Persons paroled into the U.S. are legally admitted, but have no regular immigration status. The Haitians face the threat of deportation because in the 1996 immigration law, Congress reduced the opportunities for persons in their predicament to seek immigrant status. In part, this was done through retroactive changes in immigration procedures.

The threat of deportation has been delayed, but not removed, by executive action. On December 23, 1997, President Clinton directed the Attorney General to defer deportation proceedings for Haitians for one year, with the exception of criminals and a few other categories. However, this order has not yet filtered through the system: in mid-January, immigration courts and INS attorneys in Florida were still pressing ahead with deportation hearings.

House and Senate bills (S. 1504, introduced by Senator Bob Graham of Florida, and H.R. 3049, a companion bill introduced by Representative John Conyers) would make this relief permanent by offering legal permanent residence to Haitians paroled into the United States or who applied for asylum by December 31, 1995.

The INS estimates that this legislation would cover 30,000 to 40,000 individuals, including 11,000 who were paroled into the United States from the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba between 1991 and 1993. They had been interdicted at sea, held at the base, and admitted to the U.S. after a pre-

screening process determined that they had a credible fear of persecution — the first step to qualifying for refugee or asylum admission. (During that time, about two thirds of the Haitians interviewed at Guantanamo failed to meet that standard and were returned to Haiti.) The rest entered by other means and filed asylum claims. All entered before December 31, 1995.

Some argue that for Congress to permit these Haitians to "adjust status" — to become legal permanent residents instead of parolees — would be to grant a special exception that they do not deserve, or that would break new ground in American immigration and refugee policy.

In fact, Congress has acted many times to resolve similar situations by allowing the affected group to remain in the United States. This has been done for both humanitarian and administrative reasons, to prevent the need for asylum officers to process thousands of individual claims, when it is known that many of the individuals in the group would qualify for asylum on the merits of their individual cases.

To these ends, special legislation was enacted in the 1950's for Hungarian freedom fighters, their families, and other East Europeans; in the 1960's, for Cubans; in the 1970's, for Chinese, Soviet Jews, and Indochinese; in the 1980's, for Haitians, Cubans, Jews and Christians from the former Soviet Union, and Indochinese; and in 1997 for Chinese, Nicaraguans, Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and East Europeans.

Congress should follow suit with the Haitians as a matter of equity — to give them

the same treatment given Central Americans last year — and for the following reasons.

Refugees should not be returned. The Haitians have not received refugee status because the U.S. government has not established in each individual case that they have a well-founded fear of persecution if they were forced to return. Case-by-case determinations are probably impossible to make at this date, however. Even if granted individual hearings, many would lack the recall of events and circumstances to make a complete case, and asylum officers would therefore have difficulty making informed judgments. Nonetheless, the 11,000 admitted through Guantanamo met the "credible fear of persecution" in interviews with U.S. officials. Haiti has changed for the better since the restoration of elected civilian government, but its new police force and judicial apparatus are still in their infancy. Human rights violations persist, committed by extremists of the right and the left. Mass deportation of those in the United States would not guarantee that all would face persecution, but it is virtually certain that some would face persecution. In the assessment of Amnesty International, "anyone returning to Haiti cannot be assured that they will be protected by the existing Haitian justice system from former officials who occasioned their flight."

They are welcome in their communities. The communities in which the Haitians have settled have welcomed them, accept them, and urge Congress to grant them immigrant status. The legislation is endorsed by Florida's Senators, House members of both parties, the mayor of Miami-Dade County, the *Miami Herald*, the Archdiocese of Miami, and other community figures.

They have established roots. Some of the Haitians have been here for seven years. Many have U.S. citizen children; they are part of their local communities and economies; many have started businesses. It makes more sense to put them on the path to U.S. citizenship than to uproot them and deport them.

U.S. foreign policy would benefit. Even more than in the Central American case, the Haitians would return to a country that is struggling to get back on its feet after a period of conflict, where the economy is fragile, unemployment is high, and remittances from relatives overseas help many to meet their basic needs, and even provide seed capital for small farmers and businesses. A mass deportation would work against the bipartisan goal of assisting Haiti's recovery.

Against a case based on equity, humanitarianism, and foreign policy considerations, proponents of deportation offer no compelling evidence that the U.S. interest would be served by deporting these Haitians. They claim that Haitians have received preferential treatment, but in fact they have never received the preferences granted Cubans under the Cuban Adjustment Act (automatic legal permanent resident status one year after arrival), and they got none of the benefits extended to Central Americans last year, despite the strong claim many have to refugee status. Congress should act as it did last year, and make permanent the President's one-year suspension of deportation.

The Alexis de Tocqueville Institution is a non-profit, non-partisan public-policy research organization located in Arlington, Virginia.

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Divider Title: 2

Why Congress Should Enact Legislation to Protect Haitian Refugees in the United States

Congress is now considering bi-partisan legislation that would end the legal limbo status of certain Haitian refugees who have been temporarily protected in the U.S. from deportation. "The Haitian Refugee and Immigration Fairness Act" has been introduced in both the House of Representatives and the Senate to provide permanent relief for these deserving refugees. The legislation passed the Senate Judiciary Committee by voice vote, and identical language has passed the full Senate as an amendment to the Senate Treasury/Postal appropriations bill (HR4104). Congress should act to pass this legislation that would protect Haitians. Here's why:

The Haitian refugees who would benefit from this legislation, for the most part, sought refuge here after fleeing 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. They, and others like them, suffered at the hands of regimes whose police, military and paramilitary forces engaged in the brutal killings, rape, and torture of its citizens. Many of these individuals were given temporary safe haven on our naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and were later allowed into the U.S. after they were determined to have a "credible fear" of persecution.

The Haitian refugees protected by the legislation are already here in the United States. Many, in fact, were permitted to come to the United States after U.S. officials determined that they had a "credible fear" of persecution in Haiti. Enactment of the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act would only benefit arrivals currently in the United States, and not provide any benefit to future arrivals.

The number of Haitian refugees protected is relatively small. According to estimates made by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the number of Haitians already in the United States that would benefit from this legislation is fewer than 45,000—far fewer than the number of Nicaraguans and Cubans granted the opportunity to pursue similar relief as a result of the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act passed last year.

It is in our national interest to allow Haiti's fragile democracy to take hold. That job will be made 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, in which thousands of people attempt to flee by boat. It took U.S. military intervention to restore order after the last round of violence, and the achievements of our peacekeeping effort would be cancelled if we forced thousands of refugees back to Haiti at this time. Haitian President Rene Preval has asked President Clinton to recognize the fragile political and economic situation in Haiti in considering relief for Haitian nationals in the United States.

There is ample precedent for providing similar relief to people who fled persecution. Congress has enacted legislation providing relief for other populations fleeing similar violence on at least ten occasions since the late 1950s. This was done in 1958 for Hungarians; 1960 for Europeans; 1966 for Cubans; 1977 for Indochinese; 1978 for Chinese, Soviets, and Indochinese; 1986 for Cubans and Haitians; 1992 for Chinese Students; 1996 for Poles and Hungarians; and 1997 for Nicaraguans and Cubans.

Restoration of the democratically elected government in Haiti does not necessarily mean that it is safe for all to return. Amnesty International USA, the internationally respected human rights organization, has indicated that the safety of Haitian nationals can not be assured upon their return. In testimony before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration on December 17, 1997, Amnesty International indicated that the situation in Haiti is unstable and has worsened in recent months. The problem is that the individuals who persecuted those who ultimately fled have never been arrested, and “[a]nyone returning to Haiti cannot be assured that they will be protected by the existing Haitian justice system...”

Haitian nationals living in the United States have contributed greatly to the communities in which they live. Many have married, had children, bought homes, started businesses, and served in the military. In bettering their lives, they have enriched the American communities into which they have settled.

The history of the U.S. immigration policy towards our Haitian neighbors has been marked by insensitivity and unequal treatment. It's time to make up for past mistakes. A review of our immigration policy and practice toward Haitians would more than adequately demonstrate harsh and arbitrary treatment. This treatment has ranged from surrounding the island of Haiti with our Coast guard—in order to prevent refugees from escaping beyond Haitian waters—to an almost automatic denial of Haitian asylum seekers. During almost 20 years of protracted litigation, federal court judges have repeatedly criticized the INS for its wholesale violations of Haitians' fundamental legal rights.

HAITIANS WHO WOULD BE HELPED BY THE HAITIAN REFUGEE IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1997

September 3, 1998

After years of being ruled by repressive dictatorship, the Haitian people, in 1990, elected a popular leader whose administration, just seven months after taking power, was violently overthrown in a military coup. Coup leaders and their supporters plunged the nation into a state of chaos, as thousands of individuals who supported the democratic government were subject to imprisonment, torture, rape, and even extra-judicial killings. In fear of persecution, thousands of Haitians fled by boat in search of refuge. Many of these Haitians were paroled into the U.S. after demonstrating a credible fear of persecution. After years of being left in immigration limbo, "The Haitian Refugee and Immigration Fairness Act" has been introduced in both the House of Representatives and the Senate to provide permanent relief for these deserving refugees. The legislation passed the Senate Judiciary Committee by voice vote, and identical language has passed the full Senate (91-5) as an amendment to the Treasury/Postal appropriations bill (HR 4104). The individuals listed below are examples of those who would be aided by this legislation.

Alexandra

Alexandra left Haiti in 1989 as a 10 year-old orphan, after the military killed her parents. She was raised by an aunt in Miami, but her application for political asylum was denied. She attends Miami-Dade Community College and works for a limousine company. She has no family in Haiti. Both of her siblings are able to stay in the U.S.; her brother was born in the United States, and her sister married an American citizen. She applied and was granted suspension of deportation only for the relief to be withdrawn because the immigration law of 1996 retroactively applied to her. This has placed Alexandra back in immigration limbo.

Nestilia

Nestilia fled to the U.S. from Haiti in 1992 via Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Soldiers smashed in her door, came into her bedroom, threatened to kill her, assaulted and raped her. Paramilitaries killed her brother. Her mother was able to get Nestilia out, but Nestilia was forced to leave her mother and sister behind and has not heard from them since. Nestilia has applied for asylum and is still waiting to be interviewed. She came to the U.S. in hope of working and studying in peace. She has graduated from high school, has completed a secretarial training program, works two jobs, supports herself and her younger brother, who is a junior in high school.

Denise

Denise is a mother of both Haitian born and U.S. born children. Since fleeing Haiti in 1992 and settling in the U.S., she has worked hard to create a safe new beginning for her children. Without the legislation, Denise's family is at risk of being divided or her children face being sent to a country they have never known.

Emmanuel

Emmanuel fled Haiti fearing his life in 1992. He was forced to leave behind his wife and three children. After demonstrating a legitimate fear of persecution, Emmanuel was paroled into the U.S. through Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. He applied for asylum but was denied last year as a result of the retroactivity of the 1996 immigration legislation.

Prepared by the National Immigration Forum

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Leaders Call for Fair Treatment of Haitian Refugees

In 1997, Congress passed legislation to provide relief from deportation for some Central American, Cuban, and Eastern European immigrants whose status in the United States was called into question by overly-restrictive provisions of the 1996 immigration law. The legislation, however, failed to include any form of assistance for Haitian refugees who also fled civil wars, persecution, and political strife in their homeland.

Disappointed and indignant at this clear disparity of treatment based on nationality rather than circumstances, elected officials, religious leaders, and community representatives continue to advocate for the fair treatment of Haitian refugees in America. On December 23, 1997, President Clinton used his executive authority to direct the Attorney General and the Immigration and Naturalization Service to defer the deportation of Haitian refugees for one year. In the meantime, "The Haitian Refugee and Immigration Fairness Act" has been introduced in both the House of Representatives and the Senate to provide permanent relief for these deserving refugees. This bipartisan legislation passed the Senate Judiciary Committee by voice vote, and identical language has passed the full Senate (91-5) as an amendment to the Treasury/Postal appropriations bill (HR 4104).

President Bill Clinton

"I strongly urge the Congress to provide to Haitians treatment similar to that provided to Central Americans. In recent weeks, Members of Congress and representatives of the Haitian community have highlighted the compelling plight of thousands of Haitians in the United States. Their experiences parallel those of Central Americans in many ways. ... These Haitians have made vital contributions to their communities and have established deep roots in the United States. Providing them with an opportunity to gain permanent status in the U.S. is not only equitable, but also critical to helping Haiti establish a strong and lasting democracy – a goal to which the United States continues to devote substantial energy and resources." (Letter to Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-GA), Speaker of the House of Representatives, November 4, 1997)

Sen. Spencer Abraham (R-MI), Chairman, Senate Subcommittee on Immigration

"U.S. immigration law should not turn on arbitrary distinctions between members of different nationalities. Rather it should treat like cases alike regardless of nationality. ... I am pleased that the current legislative work on Haitians and this hearing seem to be bringing people together and that a number of the key proponents of the Central American legislation are here today supporting the effort to provide relief to Haitians. It is our hope that we will be able to address the Haitian relief issue in Congress early next year." (Statement, Senate Subcommittee on Immigration Hearing Concerning "The Haitian Refugee and Immigration Fairness Act," December 17, 1997)

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA)

"Last year, Congress changed the rules and broke faith with thousands of refugee families from Central America and Haiti. These families fled civil war, death squads, and oppression. They found safe haven in America, and they have contributed significantly to the United States and to communities across the country." (Statement, November 4, 1997)

Sen. Connie Mack (R-FL)

"The Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act seeks to provide full and fair consideration for those who came to the United States fleeing civil strife in their homeland. It is the right thing to do." ("A Quest to Keep Haitians in U.S.," *Miami Herald*, November 11, 1997)

Congressional Black Caucus

"Haitians have made vital contributions to their local communities in this country. Unfairly deporting them will tear apart many families who have abided by our laws." (Letter signed by all 42 members of the Congressional Black Caucus, October 21, 1997)

Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-FL)

"I'm on record supporting amnesty, and I support amnesty for the Haitians, and I think that would be a fair solution." ("Green Cards Approved for All But Haitians," *Miami Herald*, November 14, 1997)

Rep. Xavier Becerra (D-CA), Chairman, The Congressional Hispanic Caucus

"Our goal has been to treat all immigrants fairly and even-handedly. This latest legislation sets a dangerous precedent of favoring some while completely excluding others who find themselves in virtually identical circumstances. This is an issue of basic fairness." (Press Release, November 4, 1997)

Rep. Carrie P. Meek (D-FL)

"In Miami, Nicaraguans, Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Haitians live, work, worship, and raise their children side by side in our neighborhoods. If immigrants from different countries can do that in Miami, then surely our leaders from different political parties in Washington can put aside partisan squabbling and treat Haitian immigrants fairly, justly, and equally." ("Treat Haitian Immigrants Fairly, Justly, Equally," *Miami Herald*, November 12, 1997)

Jack Kemp, former vice-presidential Republican candidate and former Secretary of HUD

"The Haitians are in the same bind as the Central Americans whom Congress helped last year: they face a threat of deportation after years in this country. The number of Haitians is far smaller than the number of Central Americans and their individual cases are equally, if not more compelling. They have all presented cases for asylum or refugee status, and about a third cleared the first hurdle when they were interviewed in Guantanamo by INS agents and were able to establish a credible fear of persecution. Like the Central Americans, they have put down roots here, their families are growing up here, and their communities have welcomed them. ...in my mind this issue presents a chance to do the right thing by rectifying an omission in last year's bill, and to uphold our nation's tradition of accepting refugees." (Letter to Speaker Newt Gingrich, February, 24, 1998)

Jeb Bush, Republican Candidate for Governor of Florida

"Many [Haitians] have found freedom here in the last few decades from the brutal dictatorship and human rights abuses which have plagued their homeland. But after years of raising their children, starting businesses, owning homes, and building lives in this country, many face deportation today even though many thousands of other immigrants were granted eligibility for legal permanent residence last year by the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act ("NACARA").

This is simply wrong. The Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act seeks to redress this unjust omission from NACARA. It guarantees to immigrants who fled persecution in Haiti the same treatment received by oppressed refugees from elsewhere in the hemisphere. It covers a limited, well-defined group of refugees who are deserving of American citizenship. It rightly restores to them the just, unbiased treatment which is our country's hallmark, and promises to gain for us and our children the energy of yet another immigrant group." (Letter, July 14, 1998)

Catholic Bishops of Florida

"The Plight of the Haitian community in Florida has always been of special concern to the Roman Catholic bishops of Florida. We pray that [Congress] will act to right the injustice done to those who fled their island home, suffering from persecution, to seek safety and protection in the United States. ... It will be sad for our state and tragic for these people if Congress does not act to remedy the injustice that exists in singling out Haitians." (Statement published in the *Miami Herald*, June 18, 1998)

Philip Peters, Senior Fellow at the Alexis de Tocqueville Institution

"[F]or the sake of fairness, Congress should extend to the Haitians the same treatment given Central Americans last year, and given to hundreds of thousands of other immigrants since World War II. At a time when the Clinton administration has driven annual U.S. refugee admissions down by over a third, this will be one more signal of Congress' intention to keep America's doors open to people fleeing persecution in their homelands." (Op-ed, "Haitian Refugees Deserve to Stay," *The Washington Times*, April 1, 1998)

Grover Joseph Rees, former General Counsel, U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service

"Haitians who were paroled into the United States between 1991 and 1994 have many of the equities that characterize groups who have been granted adjustment of status by special legislation since 1957. They came at a time when their country was being ruled by a particularly brutal regime. ... Moreover, like many of the groups who benefited from prior legislation, these people have built their lives here in the United States." (Testimony, Senate Subcommittee on Immigration Hearing Concerning "The Haitian Refugee and Immigration Fairness Act," December 17, 1997)

Cardinal Bernard Law, Archdiocese of Boston

"The United States must provide for equitable treatment ... as well as justice for Haitians in emerging immigration legislation." (Statement, November 4, 1997)

Amnesty International

"Amnesty International's conclusion is that anyone returning to Haiti cannot be assured that they will be protected by the existing Haitian justice system from former officials who occasioned their flight. Given the concerns raised above, such assurances would appear to fall far short of what would guarantee safe return. Any blanket assessment that the change in government can allow all who fled the country to return without fear or harm is therefore incorrect in our view." (Testimony, Senate Subcommittee on Immigration Hearing Concerning "The Haitian Refugee and Immigration Fairness Act," December 17, 1997)

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JACK KEMP

February 24, 1998

Honorable Newt Gingrich
Speaker
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker

A bipartisan Senate coalition including our friends Spence Abraham and Connie Mack is beginning to move a bill to grant immigration relief to thousands of Haitians. The bill is likely to reach the House later this year.

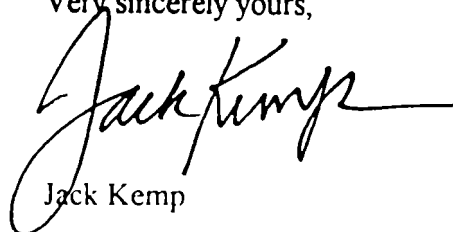
The Haitians are in the same bind as the Central Americans whom Congress helped last year: they face a threat of deportation after years in this country.

The number of Haitians is far smaller than the number of Central Americans and their individual cases are equally, if not more compelling. They have all presented cases for asylum or refugee status, and about a third cleared the first hurdle when they were interviewed in Guantanamo by INS agents and were able to establish a credible fear of persecution. Like the Central Americans, they have put down roots here, their families are growing up here, and their communities have welcomed them.

Many will attempt to argue the political pluses and minuses, but in my mind this issue presents a chance to do the right thing by rectifying an omission in last year's bill, and to uphold our nation's tradition of accepting refugees.

In that spirit, I respectfully urge you and all my friends in the House, to look sympathetically at this legislation when it comes your way.

Very sincerely yours,


Jack Kemp

JEB BUSH
9200 SOUTH DADELAND BOULEVARD
SUITE 417
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33156

July 14, 1998

Dear Friends and Supporters of Equal Treatment for Haitian Refugees,

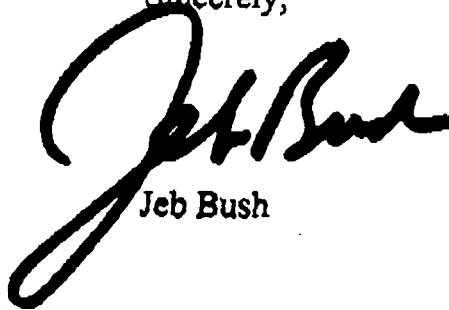
Our nation's greatness is due in no small measure to the principle of equality and the application of that principle to our refugees. As long as there has been a United States, the world's most oppressed peoples have found a haven from injustice and new opportunity on its shores. In return for the fairness and equal justice under law which our government has traditionally shown them, refugees have blessed this country with their talent and effort, fought and died for it in every war our nation has waged, and made it democracy's brightest beacon of hope for two centuries.

Since the days of Toussaint l'Ouverture, the people of Haiti have made a rich contribution to the United States. Many have found freedom here in the last few decades from the brutal dictatorship and human rights abuses which have plagued their homeland. But after years of raising their children, starting businesses, owning homes, and building lives in this country, many face deportation today even though many thousands of other immigrants were granted eligibility for legal permanent residence last year by the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act ("NACARA"). This is simply wrong.

The Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act seeks to redress this unjust omission from NACARA. It guarantees to immigrants who fled persecution in Haiti the same treatment received by oppressed refugees from elsewhere in the hemisphere. It covers a limited, well-defined group of refugees who are deserving of American citizenship. It rightly restores to them the just, unbiased treatment which is our country's hallmark, and promises to gain for us and our children the energy of yet another immigrant group.

In short, it deserves the support of all whose lives have been touched by the American tradition of free and equal treatment of immigrants, and I strongly support its enactment by Congress this year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeb Bush". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a long, horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jeb Bush

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

February 26, 1998

Dear Colleague:

We write to urge you to support S.1504, the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act. The bill would provide permanent resident status to certain Haitians who fled Haiti after the Aristide regime was toppled in a brutal military coup in 1991 and who were either paroled into the country (most passed a "credible fear" test at Guantanamo Bay after being interdicted at sea) or applied for asylum by December 31, 1995.

At a December 17, 1997 Senate Immigration Subcommittee hearing in Miami, examples of the conditions that drove people to flee Haiti during this time were recounted. Nestilia Robergeau is a 25-year-old Haitian refugee now working two jobs in Atlanta, Georgia. She described how because she was involved in a pro-democracy student group, a gang of military men beat down her door and brutally raped her. Her brother was killed by Ton Ton Macoutes, paramilitaries who were working with the military. She fears both her mother and sister are dead as well. Ten-year-old Louiciana Miclisse testified that her Aunt recently told her the truth: that her parents did not die in Haiti because they were ill but because the military killed her father, a pro-democracy leader; her mother was also killed. She pleaded for passage of a law that will prevent her from being sent back to Haiti.

At the same hearing, we were also informed that the Haitian government has not yet established the civil institutions necessary to protect these and other refugees from further retribution by those who perpetrated these human rights crimes. Rather, it appears that despite the efforts this country has made to restore order there, perpetrators of human rights crimes, past and present, continue to operate with impunity and may seek further vengeance. Amnesty International testified, "Our conclusion is that anyone returning to Haiti cannot be assured that they will be protected by the existing Haitian justice system from former officials who occasioned their flight."

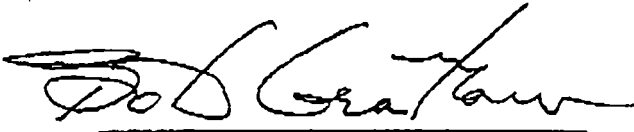
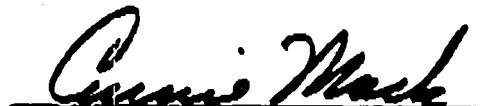
Leaders in the communities where most of the Haitians live, both Democrats and Republicans, support legislative relief of this type. In addition to the bipartisan cosponsorship of Florida's two Senators, Florida Representatives, Carrie Meek (D) and Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R) are sponsoring similar legislation in the House.

It is important to note that this bill is not without precedent. Rather, Grover Joseph Rees, former INS General Counsel

during the Bush Administration, testified at the Subcommittee hearing in Miami, it has been the rule rather than the exception that when a human rights emergency has led to the admission of large number of parolees from a particular country, such refugees and other similarly situated have been subsequently granted permanent residency through Congressional action. In recent years, Congress has granted permanent residence on that basis to Hungarians, Poles, Soviets, Vietnamese, Chinese and most recently, Cubans and Nicaraguans.

It is an important American principle that people in similar circumstances, regardless of their nationality, be treated similarly under U.S. law. Please join us in cosponsoring the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act. Contact Caroline Berver in Senator Graham's office at 4-0852 or Jamie Brown in Senator Mack's office at 4-6697.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Bob Graham in cursive script, underlined.Handwritten signature of Carrie Mack in cursive script, underlined.

LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART
21ST DISTRICT, FLORIDA
COMMITTEE ON
RULES
VICE CHAIRMAN,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
RULES AND ORGANIZATION
OF THE HOUSE
COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
(SENIORITY RETAINED)



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0921
July 21, 1998

PLEASE REPLY TO:
WASHINGTON OFFICE:
☐ 404 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0921
(202) 225-4211
DISTRICT OFFICE:
☐ 8526 N.W. 63RD TERRACE
SUITE 102
MIAMI, FL 33166
(305) 470-8566

**Cosponsor Legislation to Extend Adjustment of Status to
Haitians and Honduran Refugees.**

TIME IS RUNNING OUT

"Time is no friend, either. Less than 40 working days remain before Oct. 9, the date that Congress has scheduled for adjournment. Without immigration relief by then, these Haitians, many with U.S.-born children, could be deported after President Clinton's "shield" expires on Dec. 23. Haitian refugees need champions in Congress, and they need them now."

The Miami Herald, Thursday, July 9

Dear Colleague:

In the 1980's and early 1990's, thousands of Haitians fled to the United States to escape the violence that erupted following Haiti's military coup and the capture of power by Gen. Raoul Cedras. Today, according to Amnesty International, "Anyone returning to Haiti cannot be assured that they will be protected by the existing Haitian justice system from former officials who occasioned their flight."

On December 23, 1997 the President used his Executive authority to direct the Attorney General and the Immigration and Naturalization Service to defer deportation of Haitian refugees for one year. On December 23, 1998 approximately 50,000 Haitians will face the serious risk of immediate deportation if Congress does not pass H.R. 3033 or H.R. 3049 (the companion bill to S. 1504). Deportation would severely impact the communities in states where Haitians live and work, such as New York, Massachusetts and Florida.

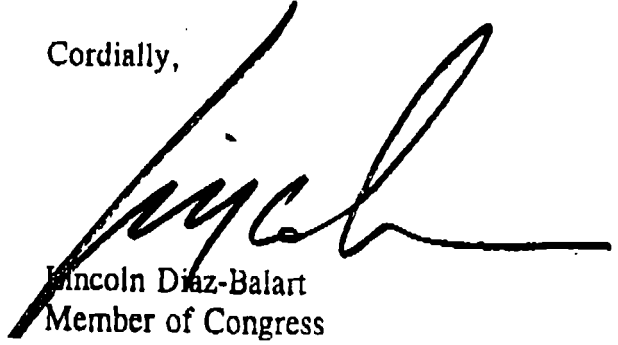
Similarly, approximately 90,000 Honduran refugees who fled their homeland to escape the spillover violence caused by the Central American wars settled in Florida, Louisiana, and California. In coming to American soil, they assumed skilled and semi-skilled occupations and now comprise a valuable segment of our workforce. Both H.R. 3231 and 3553, which would extend relief to Hondurans, have yet to be considered by the Immigration Subcommittee.

Families affected in the Haitian and Honduran refugee communities pay taxes, own businesses

Families affected in the Haitian and Honduran refugee communities pay taxes, own businesses, have siblings and children who are U.S. citizens. Given the change in political conditions in their native countries and with no real prospect of re-establishing their lives in their countries of origin, asylum is no longer a reasonable remedy. Adjustment of status is the only form of relief that will afford them a just resolution to their long-pending asylum claims. If you or your staff are interested in helping to support consideration of legislation to assist the Haitian and Honduran refugees, please contact **Tom Intorcio** of my staff at 5-4211. Thank you for your consideration.

Time and fairness are of the essence in this matter.

Cordially,



Lincoln Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress

LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

21ST DISTRICT, FLORIDA

COMMITTEE ON

RULES

VICE CHAIRMAN,

SUBCOMMITTEE ON

RULES AND ORGANIZATION
OF THE HOUSE

COMMITTEE ON

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
(SENIORITY RETAINED)



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-0921

July 31, 1998

PLEASE REPLY TO
WASHINGTON OFFICE

☐ 401 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0121
(202) 225-4211

☐ DISTRICT OFFICE:
8525 N.W. 53RD TERRACE
SUITE 102
MIAMI, FL 33166
(305) 470-8855

Cosponsor Legislation to Extend Adjustment of Status to Haitian Refugees.

TIME IS RUNNING OUT

Dear Colleague:

In the 1980's and early 1990's, thousands of Haitians fled to the United States to escape the violence that erupted following Haiti's military coup and the capture of power by Gen. Raoul Cedras. In 1992 approximately 10,000 of these Haitians were given permission by the Attorney General to enter the United States after they evidenced credible fears of persecution and strong cases for asylum. Today, according to Amnesty International, "Anyone returning to Haiti cannot be assured that they will be protected by the existing Haitian justice system from former officials who occasioned their flight." (Testimony, Senate Subcommittee on Immigration Hearing Concerning The Haitian Refugee and Immigration Fairness Act, December 17, 1997)

One of the effects of the 1996 Immigration Law was that it retroactively curtailed the availability of humanitarian relief. This change coupled with administrative changes, backlogs, and delays at INS subjected Haitian refugees to rampant deportation proceedings. According to the INS Asylum Director in Miami, as of January, 1998, only 15 percent of Haitian asylum requests were being approved.

Due to the unique parole status of Haitians and a disagreement over their status in the House and Senate, Haitians were not included in the 1997 Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act. In response to a bipartisan request for intervention, on December 23, 1997, the President used his Executive authority to direct the Attorney General and the Immigration and Naturalization Service to defer deportation of Haitian refugees for one year.

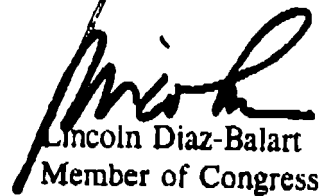
On December 23, 1998 approximately 50,000 Haitians will face the serious risk of immediate deportation if Congress does not pass H.R. 3049 (the companion bill to S. 1504), H.R. 3033 or similar relief. Deportation of these individuals and others who have pending claims would severely impact the communities in states such as New York, Massachusetts and Florida.

Haitian refugee families pay taxes, own businesses, and have siblings and children who are U.S. citizens. Given the change in political conditions in their native countries and with no real prospect of re-establishing their lives in their countries of origin, asylum is no longer a

... Given the change in political conditions in their native countries and with no real prospect of re-establishing their lives in their countries of origin, asylum is no longer a reasonable remedy. Moreover, if many of these refugees had their asylum claims processed on schedule before the 1996 Immigration Reform Act went into effect, they would now be lawful permanent residents or U.S. citizens. Adjustment of status is the only form of relief that will afford them a just resolution to their long-pending asylum claims. If you or your staff are interested in helping to support consideration of legislation to assist the Haitian refugees, please contact **Tom Intorcio** of my staff at 5-4211. Thank you for your consideration.

Time and fairness are of the essence in this matter.

Cordially,



Lincoln Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress

COMMITTEES:

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
GOVERNMENT REFORM

CHAIR:

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC
POLICY AND TRADE

VICE CHAIR:

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
WESTERN HEMISPHERE



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

18TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

Statement By Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

☐ 2240 RAYBURN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0918
(202) 225-3931
FAX (202) 225-5620

DISTRICT OFFICE:

☐ 9210 SUNSET DRIVE
SUITE 100
MIAMI, FL 33173
(305) 275-1800
FAX (305) 275-1801

As Americans, we believe that the United States is the world's greatest democracy, the birthplace of human rights, the country so wonderful in its liberty and sovereignty that persons from all other nations want to live here. In this great country, we uphold human rights regardless of an individual's choice of religion, political ideologies, ethnicity, race, or gender.

We defend the right to freedom of thought and expression, due process and just protection of the law. We vehemently condemn torture, beatings, rape, arbitrary imprisonment and murder. 600 miles southeast off the coast of Florida, these brutal practices which we denounce as Americans abiding in a free country, were once a standard part of everyday life for the native Haitian.

The inhabitants of this island were inhumanely abused, tormented, persecuted and even murdered. Historically, Haiti has endured authoritarian regimes and political turmoil, characterized by a widespread violence. Even today, serious problems abound in Haiti.

According to a country report on Haiti by our State Department, "Cases in which the National Police mistreated detainees - sometimes severely - increased dramatically in 1996. The UN/OAS International Civilian Mission documented 86 instances of mistreatment in the first 5 months of 1996, and such violations of human rights continued throughout the year." As the situation in Haiti deteriorated to an intolerable level, Haitians desperately fled their homeland in search of peace and safety.

In an effort to improve the situation in Haiti, the US intervened with the rebuilding of institutions and infrastructure, the promoting of respect for human rights and the fostering of Haiti's social and economic development. In the midst of this turmoil, Haitian immigrants settled in the United States and made it their home. They became our neighbors, raised their families, worked among us, paid their taxes and attended our schools.

They aspired to live the American dream much like each of our ancestors did when they first arrived to the new world. I thank my colleagues, Bob Graham and Carrie Meek, for bringing a glimpse of light into the lives of these many Haitian refugees, who have established communities, businesses and have been a vibrant part of our US economy.

Carrie Meek's House Bill 3033 will "adjust the immigration status of certain Haitian nationals who were provided refuge in the United States." Prior to H.R. 3033, I also joined Congresswoman Meek by cosponsoring her H.R. 2442, the Freedom for Immigrants Facing Persecution in their Native Country Act of 1997. This bill would have "amended the Immigration and Nationality Act to authorize the Attorney General to cancel the removal and adjust the status of certain Haitian and Central American aliens."

In the Senate, Senator Bob Graham has realized the need for Haitians to be treated fairly and has advocated for equal treatment for political refugees from Haiti. Due to his outstanding leadership for justice in immigration, we are hopeful over the progress of legislation that will provide relief and peace of mind to many Haitian immigrants.

For the US Haitian exile community who fled because their lives were in danger, "chay la tro lou." This Creole expression simply means "the weight is too heavy." I join my two colleagues in their efforts to ease the burden of the Haitian community by helping to create a law that will remove this immigration inequity that has been made against them.

If you stand for liberty, for freedom and for fundamental human rights, I ask that you unite with us in our efforts to bring justice and permanent residency to the many refugees whose lives were once endangered in Haiti and who found safety by becoming a part of our wondrous democratic nation. Their future is in our hands. What choice will you make?

CARRIE P. MEEK
17TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES
TREASURY, POSTAL
SERVICE, AND GENERAL
GOVERNMENT

VA, HUD, AND
INDEPENDENT AGENCIES



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-0917

Please Respond To:

☐ 481 CANNON
OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC
(202) 225-4588
(202) 225-0777 FAX

☐ 25 WEST FLAGLER II
SUITE 1915
MIAMI, FL 33139
(305) 351-9541
(305) 351-8376 FAX

COSPONSOR MY BIPARTISAN BILL TO GIVE EQUAL TREATMENT TO HAITIAN IMMIGRANTS

Dear Colleague:

January 30, 1998

The last Congress enacted the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 ("IIRIRA"), which makes it easier to deport immigrants even though they have lived here for many years, working hard, paying taxes, and obeying our laws.

Last November, Congress voted to exempt certain groups of immigrant — but not Haitians — from these harsh requirements. Title II of H.R. 2607, the fiscal year 1998 appropriations bill for the District of Columbia: (1) gives automatic "green cards" to immigrants from Cuba and Nicaragua who were in the country in 1995; (2) applies less stringent pre-IIRIRA standards to deportation proceedings for some immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Eastern Europe who are in the United States; and (3) makes the more stringent IIRIRA standards applicable to deportation proceedings for immigrants from Haiti and other countries who are in the United States.

It is unfair to treat Haitian immigrants differently than immigrants from other countries. H. R. 3033, the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1997, gives "green cards" to Haitians who were in the country in December 1995. I urge you to join 81 other Members* in cosponsoring this bipartisan bill.

If you or your staff have any questions, please contact me or Benjamin Cohen of my staff (54506).

Sincerely,

CARRIE P. MEEK
Member of Congress

*Current cosponsors are: Abercrombie, Ackerman, Baldacci, Berman, Bishop, Boyd, Carson, Christian-Green, Corrine Brown, George Brown, Clay, Clayton, Clyburn, Conyers, Danny Davis, Delahunt, DeLauro, Dellums, Diaz-Balart, Dixon, Engel, Eshoo, Farr, Fattah, Filner, Ford, Frank, Frost, Furse, Gutierrez, Alcee Hastings, Hefner, Hilliard, Hinojosa, Holden, Jackson, Jackson-Lee, Jefferson, Eddie Johnson, Kanjorski, Joseph Kennedy, Patrick Kennedy, Kennelly, Kilpatrick, John Lewis, McDermott, McGovern, McKinney, Menendez, Millender-McDonald, Mink, James Moran, Nadler, Norton, Owens, Pallone, Pascrell, Pastor, Payne, Rahall, Rangel, Rivers, Romero-Barcelo, Ros-Lehtinen, Royball-Allard, Rush, Sanchez, Sawyer, Scott, Serrano, Spratt, Strickland, Stokes, Thompson, Thurman, Towns, Underwood, Waters, Watt, Woolsey, and Wynn.

FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

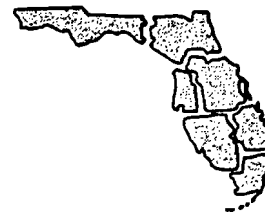
POST OFFICE BOX 1638
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32302-1638

PHONE (850) 222-3803

FAX (850) 681-9548

www.flccathconf.org

D. MICHAEL MCCARRON, PH.D.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**AN OPEN LETTER TO
THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION OF FLORIDA
URGING SUPPORT FOR THE HAITIAN RELIEF LEGISLATION**

June 19, 1998

Dear Honorable Senators and Representatives:

The plight of the Haitian community in Florida has always been of special concern to us.

We, the Bishops of Florida, raise our voices in prayer that you will act to right the injustice now done this people who came to us fleeing their island home, suffering from persecution, to seek safety and protection in the United States.

We ask for compassionate and just treatment for our Haitian brothers and sisters, just as when Congress moved last year to correct the wrongs our system inflicted on Nicaraguans and others through the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA).

Like the Haitians among us, the Nicaraguans and Cubans covered by that bill, were welcomed to our shores following policies set by the Federal Government. At the time of the debate on NACARA, we pleaded along with our brother Bishops of the United States, that Haitians be rightly included in that relief. You now have the opportunity to correct this.

We were heartened when on April 23, 1998, a bipartisan majority of the Senate Judiciary Committee approved the Haitian Fairness Act, which would grant lawful permanent

resident status to some 40,000 Haitian nationals in the United States, including unaccompanied, abandoned and orphaned children. Both Senators Graham and Mack have done much to support this bill, as have others among you, particularly those from South Florida, home to most Haitians in our midst. Through this letter, we are urging support from all in our congressional delegation for legislation to provide relief for deserving Haitians.

This measure has wide support in the Greater Miami community. Nicaraguans, Cubans, Central Americans, African-Americans, Republicans and Democrats alike have all raised their voices in a call for relief for Haitians. South Florida is a community striving for the Gospel tradition which lies at the heart of American society, that of welcoming the refugee and stranger among us. It will be sad for our State and tragic for these people if Congress does not act to remedy the injustice that exists in the Haitian people being singled out.

Now, this legislation must be considered by the full Senate. The U.S. House of Representatives also has Haitian relief legislation before it. We urge you to join together as a delegation to ask the Congressional leadership to work to bring relief to these people. We trust and pray that they will see the justice of granting the same compassionate treatment to these Haitians, as has wisely been done for others.

CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF FLORIDA

John Clement Favalora
Archbishop of Miami

Norbert M. Dorsey, CP
Bishop of Orlando

Agustin A. Roman
Auxiliary Bishop of Miami

John J. Snyder
Bishop of St. Augustine

John H. Ricard, SSJ
Bishop of Pensacola/Tallahassee

Thomas G. Wenski
Auxiliary Bishop of Miami

John J. Nevins
Bishop of Venice

Robert N. Lynch
Bishop of St. Petersburg

Gilberto Fernandez
Auxiliary Bishop of Miami



Migration and Refugee Services

3211 4th Street, N.E. Washington, DC 20017-1194 Tel. (202)541-3332 Fax: (202)541-3399

April 21, 1998

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
United States Senate
SD-224 Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-3802

Dear Senator Hatch:

I urge you to support S. 1504, the "Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1997" when that measure is considered. As you may know S. 1504 is jointly sponsored by Senators Bob Graham (D-FL), Connie Mack (R-FL), Spencer Abraham (R-MI) and Edward Kennedy (D-MA).

The Catholic Church has long maintained its commitment to those seeking refuge here and elsewhere around the world. In my capacity as the Bishop of Oakland and in my role as Chairman of the Committee on Migration for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops/ United States Catholic Conference, I speak out on behalf of Haitians seeking refuge in the United States, a people of special concern to the Catholic Church. Haitians are without access to clarification as either immigrants or refugees. Our message has been clear and consistent that those who have existed in this state of uncertainty deserve to have their situation resolved in a just and compassionate manner. Only Congress can act to do so.

The people of Haiti have long struggled to establish a democratic government in their country and suffered persecution at the hands of those in control of the government. From the September 1991 overthrow of Haiti's elected government until its restoration three years later, military and paramilitary repression targeted many Haitian nationals who had supported the democratically elected government. Many faced torture, rape, extrajudicial killings, imprisonment, and other forms of persecution. Much of this repression was documented by the Department of State. This caused many to flee in search of refuge and protection.

Prior to the brief period in 1991 during which there was a democratically elected government, Haiti had been ruled by brutal dictators who had engaged in systematic torture and persecution of dissidents. During that time, too, men, women, and children fleeing persecution in Haiti had made their way to the United States in search of freedom and safety.

Unless Congress acts soon, Haitians who came here fleeing those conditions will be forced out of the United States. This would be unwise and unfair for a number of reasons. First, many would still face persecution if they were to return to Haiti. While Haiti's democratically elected government has now been restored and it struggles to remain in place, some of the vestiges of

former brutal regimes remain throughout the countryside. Many who are now here in the U.S. still face persecution at the hands of these forces.

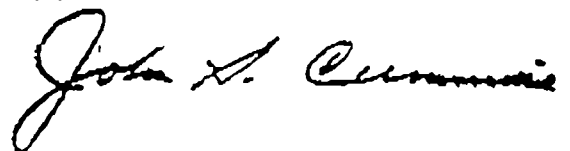
Second, many have built homes and families here. In the intervening years since the restoration of Haiti's democratically elected government, many who were permitted to come to the United States have built lives here. Many have married, had children, bought homes, started businesses, and otherwise enriched the American communities in which they have settled. Sending them away from the lives they have built would cause great hardship for themselves, their families, and the communities in which they have settled.

And lastly, sending these Haitians back to Haiti could destabilize its fragile democracy and economy. For example, it has been estimated that Haitian nationals living in the United States send back \$400 million to \$500 million in remittances each year.

Late in the last session, Congress enacted the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA), which provided for permanent residence for an estimated 150,000 Nicaraguans and 5,000 Cubans. While the aggressors these people fled had different names and wore different uniforms, the terror that prompted their flight is the same as the Haitians. We strongly believe that equal relief should be offered to all who are similarly situated. S. 1504 would provide equal relief to a smaller group of Haitians (estimated by the INS to be just at 40,000) who were paroled in the United States or requested political asylum before 1996. More than 11,000 of them were "screened in" to the United States by INS asylum officers on Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, who determined that they, indeed, had "credible" asylum claims. S. 1504 is a modest attempt to provide urgently needed relief to a very small number of Haitian nationals in our midst. Indeed, we believe there are slightly more Haitians in our country deserving relief than S. 1504 would cover. We encourage the Committee not only to provide relief to the Haitians covered in S. 1504, but also to the small number of other Haitian nationals, including children, who are so deserving.

I urge your support for S. 1504 when this measure comes before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John S. Cummins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being the most prominent.

Most Reverend John S. Cummins
Bishop of Oakland
Chairman, NCCB Committee on Migration

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS



815 SIXTEENTH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006

JOHN J. SWEENEY
PRESIDENT

RICHARD L. TRUMKA
SECRETARY-TREASURER

LINDA CHAVEZ-THOMPSON
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

LEGISLATIVE ALERT!

(202) 637-5090

March 30, 1998

The Honorable Spencer Abraham, Chairman
Subcommittee on Immigration
SD-323 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Abraham:

The AFL-CIO strongly supports S.1504, the Haitian Refugee Fairness Immigration Act of 1998, which is scheduled for mark-up by the Immigration Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee on April 1. The bill provides the opportunity and hope denied thousands of Haitian refugees by the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central America Relief Act (NACARA).

Both Presidents Clinton and Bush allowed Haitians to lawfully enter the United States. The Immigration and Naturalization Service has made a preliminary finding that many Haitians interdicted at sea did have a credible fear of persecution. Since that time many of these same Haitian refugees have become integral, vital parts of their communities, while others continue to languish at Guantanamo Bay. The Deferred Enforced Departure directive issued by President Clinton only stays deportation temporarily (about 9 more months); it does not give Haitians the same opportunity to adjust their status to permanent resident as was offered to other nationalities through NACARA. If deported, Haitian refugees would return to a country where they have few ties and whose political situation continues to evolve.

It is wrong to treat similarly situated persons differently based on nationality. The U.S. allowed Haitians and other refugees to seek sanctuary in our country from persecution and political unrest. We must not deny Haitian refugees the opportunity to live in peace and prosper in the U.S., especially when the opportunity has been offered to others.

The AFL-CIO urges the Immigration Subcommittee to support S.1504 and end the practice of treating refugees who have established a credible fear of persecution differently based on nationality.

Yours truly,

Peggy Taylor, Director

DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATION

c: All members of the Subcommittee on Immigration

NCLR

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LA RAZA

Raul Yzaguirre, President

September 3, 1998

The Honorable Ben Nighthorse Campbell
United States Senate
380 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Campbell:

On behalf of the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), I am writing to urge you to support the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1998 introduced by Senators Connie Mack and Bob Graham. This legislation is part of the Senate's version of the Treasury-Postal appropriations bill.

As you are aware, the 1996 immigration reform legislation made it very difficult for refugees and immigrants who flee their home countries to secure legal status in the United States. In 1997, Congress recognized that certain groups of refugees already in the United States deserved special consideration because of our government's involvement in the affairs of their home countries. Some Nicaraguans, Salvadorans, Guatemalans and Eastern Europeans were given such special treatment under the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act of 1997 (NACARA).

Latinos across the United States believe that our immigration laws should recognize a special humanitarian situation when one exists. The limited number of Haitian refugees who fled the 1991 military overthrow of President Aristide – an ally of the United States – deserve the same consideration as the refugees covered under NACARA.

This legislation was attached without controversy to the Treasury-Postal appropriations bill in the Senate. You have an opportunity to protect a relatively small number of refugees who would suffer greatly if this legislation is not enacted. As you reconcile the differences in the appropriations bill with the House conferees, I urge you to insist on the Senate's position on this legislation and to work to secure its passage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Raul Yzaguirre
President and CEO



National Office
1111 19th Street, N.W. Suite 1100
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Church World Service
Robert Chase, World Learning
Meredith Richardson
Pearl S. Buck
William S. Reese,
Partners of the Americas

April 15, 1998

The Honorable Robert G. Torricelli
United States Senate
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-3003

Dear Senator Torricelli:

As members of the InterAction Committee on Migration and Refugee Affairs, we are writing to urge you to support S.1504 the bi-partisan legislation that would provide permanent residency to certain Haitians who sought refuge in the United States. This legislation, S.1504, is scheduled to be considered in the coming weeks in the Immigration Subcommittee.

Agencies represented on the Committee on Migration and Refugee Affairs have a long tradition of responding to those Haitian nationals who sought refuge from repressive regimes. We have consistently advocated for Haitians' right to leave their country, to seek protection against involuntary return, and to have an opportunity for their asylum claims to be heard. In addition, some of our agencies currently offer direct legal and social service assistance to Haitian asylum seekers and parolees who would be covered by the pending legislation.

We believe that Congress should pass legislation to protect Haitians for several important reasons. Haitians who would benefit from S. 1504 are primarily those who sought refuge in the United States after fleeing persecution. Many are individuals who were given temporary safe haven at the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and were later brought to the United States by our government after they were determined to have a "credible fear" of persecution. Furthermore, there is ample precedent for providing similar relief to others who have fled persecution. Since the late 1950s Congress on at least ten occasions has enacted legislation providing relief to other nationals fleeing similar repressive regimes, including Hungarians, Indochinese, Poles, Soviets, and most recently, Nicaraguans and Cubans.

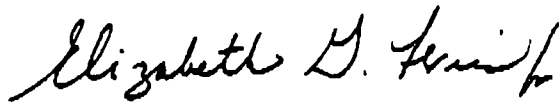
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Finally, we would point out that the number of Haitians protected under this legislation is relatively small ---fewer than 40,000 according to INS estimates. This is far fewer than the number of Nicaraguans and Cubans granted the opportunity to seek similar relief under the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) passed in the last session.

In closing, we thank you for your continued interest in issues that affect refugees and immigrants and for the important work of the Immigration Subcommittee. We reiterate our hope that you will fully support this bi-partisan legislation (S. 1504) to provide permanent residence to certain Haitians who fled persecution and have been allowed to remain in legal limbo in this country.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth G. Ferris, Chair
InterAction's Committee on Migration and Refugee Affairs

Executive Director, Immigration & Refugee Program
CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

on behalf of the following agencies:

Diana Aviv, Associate Executive Vice President for Public Policy
COUNCIL OF JEWISH FEDERATIONS

C. Richard Parkins, Director
EPISCOPAL MIGRATION MINISTRIES

Tsehaye Teferra, Executive Director
ETHIOPIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Leonard Glickman, Executive Vice President
HEBREW IMMIGRANT AID SOCIETY

Roger P. Winter, Executive Director
IMMIGRATION & REFUGEE SERVICES OF AMERICA
U.S. COMMITTEE FOR REFUGEES

Reynold Levy, President
INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

Rick Ryscavage, S.J., President
JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICES

Ralston H. Deffenbaugh, Jr., Executive Director
LUTHERAN IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICES

Diana D. Bui, Deputy Director
SOUTHEAST ASIA RESOURCE ACTION CENTER

Edward McNeal, Jr., Executive Director
U.S.A. for UNHCR

Mark Franken, Executive Director
U.S. CATHOLIC CONFERENCE/MIGRATION & REFUGEE SERVICES

Don Hammond, Vice President
WORLD RELIEF CORPORATION

National Immigration Forum

July 10, 1998

Dear Senator:

Attached please find a letter endorsed by 72 organizations expressing support for relief for Haitian refugees.

On April 23, 1998, the Senate Judiciary Committee passed S. 1504 "The Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1997," by voice. Senate floor action is expected this summer. We urge you to co-sponsor and to support the bill when it is before you.

Since the attached letter was last circulated, the following organizations have also expressed their support:

National Supporters

A. Philip Randolph Institute, Washington, DC
Arab American Institute
General Board of Church & Society of the United Methodist Church

Local Supporters

Baltimore Association of Caribbean Organization, Baltimore, MD
Board of County Commissioners in Miami, FL
Central American Resource Center in Los Angeles, CA
Church Avenue Merchants Block Association, (CAMBA) Brooklyn, NY
Diocese of Providence, Providence, RI
Franco-Haitian Coordination of Northeastern Conference of Seventy Adventist
Queens, NY
Fund for Immigrants & Refugees, Chicago, IL
Greater New York Conference Advantage, Manhattan, NY
Haitian Centers Council, Brooklyn, NY
Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights, Chicago, IL
Jamaican Association of Maryland, MD
Immigrant Center, Honolulu, Hawaii
Immigrant Services Catholic Charities of Rockville Center, Long Island, NY
International Institute of Buffalo, NY
International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit, MI
International Institute of the East Bay, Oakland, CA
International Institute of San Francisco, CA
Lutheran-Catholic Social Service Refugee Cooperative Ministry, Des Moines, IA
Nationalities Service Center, Philadelphia, PA
New York Immigration Coalition, New York, NY
Northwest United in New York, NY
Refugee Assistance Program, Binghamton, NY
Travelers Aid International of Greater Cincinnati, OH
Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs, Washington, DC
Western Kentucky Refugee Mutual Assistance Association, Bowling Green, KY

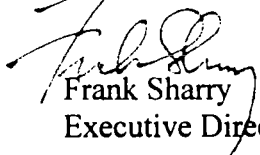
If you have any questions, please feel free to contact anyone of the following individuals:

Christina Foley
National Immigration
Forum
(202) 544-0004

Michael Hill
U.S. Catholic
Conference
Office of Gov't Liaison
(202) 541-3161

Jocelyn McCalla
National Coalition for
Haitian Rights
(212) 337-0005

Sincerely yours,


Frank Sharry
Executive Director

April 17, 1998

Dear Senator:

The undersigned organizations and individuals are writing to urge you to co-sponsor and support S. 1504, the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1997.

Enactment of S. 1504 is in the national interest and consistent with American traditions of equitable treatment and protection of the persecuted and oppressed. The Haitian refugees protected by S. 1504 are already in the United States, and many were admitted after the INS determined that they had demonstrated a credible fear of persecution. These temporarily-protected Haitians are now in a legal limbo, similar to that in which Central Americans and others found themselves prior to passage of the *Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act* (NACARA) last year. This bill would provide similar relief to that already provided for Nicaraguans and Cubans.

The number of Haitians who will benefit from this legislation, according to INS estimates, is fewer than 40,000—a much smaller number than the number of Nicaraguans and Cubans who were granted relief under NACARA.

There is significant precedent for providing to Haitians the relief which S. 1504 accords. Congress enacted similar legislation in 1957 for Hungarians; in 1966 for Cubans; in 1977 for Indochinese; in 1992 for Chinese students; in 1996 for Poles and Hungarians; and in 1997 for Nicaraguans and Cubans.

The limited number of Haitians protected under S. 1504 have contributed greatly to the communities in the United States in which they now live. Many have married, had children who are U.S. citizens, started businesses and served in the military. In Miami, New York, Boston, Chicago, and many other areas where Haitians reside, state and local officials from both parties support enactment of S. 1504.

S. 1504 has been co-sponsored on a bi-partisan basis by Senators Mack, Graham, Abraham, D'Amato, Kennedy, Moynihan, Mosely-Braun, Kerry, Durbin, and Feinstein. We urge you to join them as co-sponsors and to support the bill when it is before you.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

American Association of Jews from the Former USSR
American Friends Service Committee
American Immigration Lawyers Association
Amnesty International U.S.A
Anti-Defamation League
Catholic Charities, USA
Church of the Brethren

Church World Service, Immigration, and Refugee Program
Council of Jewish Federations
Cuban American National Council, Inc.
Haitian Advocacy Inc.
Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society
Immigration and Refugee Services of America
International Human Rights Law Clinic
Jesuit Conference of Social Ministries
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services
Mennonite Central Committee
National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium
National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials
National Coalition of Haitian Rights
National Council of La Raza
National Immigration Forum
National Korean American Service and Education Consortium
National Ministries, American Baptist Churches, USA
Salvadoran-American National Network
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
The Center for Victims of Torture
Travelers Aid
Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees
United Methodist Committee on Relief
United Methodist General Board of Church and Society
United States Catholic Conference, Migration and Refugee Services

Local Organizations

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Austin, TX
Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans, New Orleans, LA
Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New York, New York, NY
Catholic Charities Immigrant Services, Honolulu, HI
Catholic Charities Immigration Counseling Services, Dallas, TX
Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigrant Services in San Diego, San Diego, CA
Catholic Social Services Immigration Program, Philadelphia, PA
Central American Refugee Center, New York, NY
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights, Los Angeles, CA
Freedom House, Detroit, MI
Greater Boston Catholic Charities, Refugee, and Immigration Services,
Summerville, MA
Haitian American Civic Association, Boston, MA
Haitian Lawyers Leadership, Stamford, CT
Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees, New York, NY
Houston Dominican Sisters, Houston, TX
Illinois Coalition for Immigration and Refugee Protection, Chicago, IL
Immigrant Legal Resource Center, San Francisco, CA

Interfaith Community Services, New York, NY
International Institute of Boston, Boston, MA
International Institute of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA
International Institute of Rhode Island, Inc., Providence, RI
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, San Francisco, CA
Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, Washington, DC
Liberty Center for Immigration, New York, NY
Linking Action, Commitment, and Education for Solidarity (LACES),
San Jose, CA
Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota, Fargo, ND
Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota, Sioux Falls, SD
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA), Boston, MA
National Bar Association, San Diego, CA
New Jersey Immigration Policy Network, Inc., Newark, NJ
New York Association for New Americans (NYANA), New York, NY
Northwest Immigration Rights Project, Seattle, WA
Presbyterian Church (USA), Washington Office, Washington, DC
Riverside Language Program, New York, NY
Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees (SOAR) , Portland, OR
Texas Immigration and Refugee Coalition, Dallas, TX
The Central American Resource Center (CARCEN), San Francisco, CA
The Central American Resource Center (CARCEN), Washington, DC
Voices for Immigrant Justice, New York, NY
VIVE, Buffalo, NY

August 28, 1998

By Hand

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski
Senate Hart Office Building, Room 709
Washington, DC 20510

Re: The Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1998 (Amendment No. 3368 to S.2312)

Dear Senator Mikulski:

The undersigned representatives of Maryland organizations write to ask you to support the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1998 and to keep it attached without dilution as Amendment #3368 to the Senate version of the Treasury-Postal appropriations bill (S. 2312) in the upcoming House-Senate Conference.

This legislation is necessary to grant immigration relief to Haitians who fled the repression and political instability in their country after the coup d'etat of 1991. These Haitians who will receive relief have sought protection from persecution. Haitians fled one of the most repressive regimes in our hemisphere. Haitians who have come to the U.S. have made important contributions to the cultural diversity and economic vitality of our communities which would be the poorer for their departure. Our communities also do not need the divisiveness of unequal immigration policies.

Haitians in the U.S. contribute several times in remittances to their families in Haiti what our government grants in aid. Compelling Haitians to return would not only be unfair, it would also further destabilize the precarious Haitian economy after our government has invested substantial efforts to ensure the stability of constitutional government there. Finally, deportation would present many Haitian parents of U.S.-born children with the cruel choice of either uprooting these young citizens and taking them to a land they've never known, or breaking up their own families.

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski
August 28, 1998
Page 2

There is significant precedent for this measure. Congress enacted similar legislation for Hungarians in 1957, for Cubans in 1966, for Indochinese in 1977, for Chinese students in 1992, for Poles and Hungarians in 1996, and for Nicaraguans and Cubans in 1997. This legislation is already significantly more restrictive than that benefitting similarly-situated Nicaraguans last year and has been revised to restrict eligibility for public benefits.

Senator Mikulski, please join your colleagues, co-sponsoring Senators Graham, Durbin, Feinstein, Kennedy, Kerry, Moseley-Braun and Moynihan, in supporting this important amendment.

Thank you very much for your kind attention and consideration of our views. We would welcome an opportunity to discuss this issue with you in person.

Respectfully,

Dale Aukerman, Steering Committee
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191 Stem Road
Union Bridge, MD 21791

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Professor Todd Waymon
Department of Business, Managementt & Information Sciences
Montgomery College
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Martha Young, Administrator
Central Maryland Ecumenical Council (for identification only)
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Baltimore, MD 21218

July 27, 1998

The Honorable Arlen Specter
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: The Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1998 (S. 1504)

Dear Senator Specter:

The undersigned representatives of Pennsylvanian organizations write to thank you for your support of the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act (S. 1504) and encourage your leadership for enactment. We would ask you now to sign on as a full co-sponsor of this important legislation and to become its champion among your colleagues in the Senate and House in order to get it passed.

This legislation is necessary to grant immigration relief to Haitians who fled the repression and political instability in their country after the coup d'etat of 1991. These Haitians who will receive relief have sought protection from persecution. Haitians fled one of the most repressive regimes in our hemisphere. Haitians who have come to the United States have made important contributions to the cultural diversity and economic vitality of our communities which would be the poorer for their departure. Our communities also do not need the divisiveness of unequal immigration policies.

Haitians in the United States contribute several times in remittances to their families in Haiti what our government grants in aid. Compelling Haitians to return would not only be unfair, it would also further destabilize the precarious Haitian economy after our government has invested substantial efforts to ensure the stability of constitutional government there. Finally, deportation would present many Haitian parents of United States-born children with the cruel choice of either uprooting these young citizens and taking them to a land they've never known, or breaking up their own families.

There is significant precedent for this measure. Congress enacted similar legislation for Hungarians in 1957, for Cubans in 1966, for Indochinese in 1977, for Chinese students in 1992, for Poles and Hungarians in 1996, and for Nicaraguans and Cubans in 1997.

We were heartened by the bill's passage with strong bi-partisan support in the Senate Judiciary Committee on April 23, 1998. Three months have passed since then and, as this is a short legislative session, time is running out.

Senator Specter, please join your Republican colleagues Spencer Abraham, Connie Mack and Al D'Amato in co-sponsoring this important legislation. As Jack Kemp put it in his recent letter to Speaker Gingrich, this is our chance to "do the right thing" by the Haitians. Thank you very much for your kind attention and consideration of our views. We would welcome an opportunity to discuss this issue with you in person.

Respectfully,

Bishop Roy Almquist
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
506 Hawks Avenue
Norristown, PA 19401

Judith Bernstein-Baker, Executive Director
HIAS and Council Migration Service of Philadelphia
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Philadelphia, PA 19102-3348

Angela Berryman
American Friends Service Committee
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Philadelphia, PA 19102

Rev. Thomas R. Betz, O.F.M. Cap, Diocesan Director
Office of Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees
Archdiocese of Philadelphia
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Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299

Michael D. Blum, President
Nationalities Service Center
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Philadelphia, PA 19107-5812

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Akron, PA 17501-0500

Ed Cekoric
Haiti Twinning Program, Saint Jude the Apostle Roman Catholic Church
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Wilmerding, PA 15148-1123

Tim Cimino
World Peace One (For identification only)
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Pittsburgh, PA 15224-2432

Mimi Darragh, Secretary
Pittsburgh Haiti Solidarity Committee
c/o Thomas Merton Center
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Pittsburgh, PA 15224

Ned Delaney, Acting Diocesan Director
Catholic Social Services
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Kenneth George, Director
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Norman Lederer, Program Director
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Nixon Losier, General Manager
Radio Haiti
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Seneca, PA 16346-0338

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Bethlehem, PA 18015-1503

Raymond J. Torres
Witness for Peace, Mid-Atlantic Board
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Willow Grove, PA 19090-2601

Anthony J. Turo, Director of Community Outreach Services
Catholic Charities Diocese of Pittsburgh
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Pittsburgh, PA 15222-3507

Laura B. Weinstein, President
Alliance des Amis d'Haïti
PO Box 573
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004-0573

July 27, 1998

The Honorable Rick Santorum
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: The Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1998 (S. 1504)

Dear Senator Santorum:

The undersigned representatives of Pennsylvanian organizations write to encourage your leadership for enactment of the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act (S. 1504). We would ask you to sign on as a co-sponsor of this important legislation and to become its champion among your colleagues in the Senate and House in order to get it passed.

This legislation is necessary to grant immigration relief to Haitians who fled the repression and political instability in their country after the coup d'etat of 1991. These Haitians who will receive relief have sought protection from persecution. Haitians fled one of the most repressive regimes in our hemisphere. Haitians who have come to the United States have made important contributions to the cultural diversity and economic vitality of our communities which would be the poorer for their departure. Our communities also do not need the divisiveness of unequal immigration policies.

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There is significant precedent for this measure. Congress enacted similar legislation for Hungarians in 1957, for Cubans in 1966, for Indochinese in 1977, for Chinese students in 1992, for Poles and Hungarians in 1996, and for Nicaraguans and Cubans in 1997.

We were heartened by the bill's passage with strong bi-partisan support in the Senate Judiciary Committee on April 23, 1998. Three months have passed since then and, as this is a short legislative session, time is running out.

Senator Santorum, please join your Republican colleagues Spencer Abraham, Connie Mack and Al D'Amato in co-sponsoring this important legislation. As Jack Kemp put it in his recent letter to Speaker Gingrich, this is our chance to "do the right thing" by the Haitians. Thank you very much for your kind attention and consideration of our views. We would welcome an opportunity to discuss this issue with you in person.

Respectfully,

Bishop Roy Almquist
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
506 Hawks Avenue
Norristown, PA 19401

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HIAS and Council Migration Service of Philadelphia
226 South 16th Street, 18th Floor
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Angela Berryman
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Rev. Thomas R. Betz, O.F.M. Cap, Diocesan Director
Office of Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees
Archdiocese of Philadelphia
222 North 17th Street
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Michael D. Blum, President
Nationalities Service Center
1300 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107-5812

Bill Bollendorf
MACONDO
406 South Craig Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3720

Philip K. Brubaker
Peace and Justice Ministries, Mennonite Central Committee - U.S. (For identification only)
PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500

Ed Cekoric
Haiti Twinning Program, Saint Jude the Apostle Roman Catholic Church
405 Westinghouse Avenue
Wilmerding, PA 15148-1123

Tim Cimino
World Peace One (For identification only)
5135 Dearborn Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15224-2432

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Pittsburgh Haiti Solidarity Committee
c/o Thomas Merton Center
5125 Penn Avenue 15224
Pittsburgh, PA 15224

Ned Delaney, Acting Diocesan Director
Catholic Social Services
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North Carolina Justice and Community Development Center

The Honorable Lauch Faircloth
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Faircloth:

Attached is a letter expressing the support of over 25 North Carolina organizations and individuals. I hope you recognize the importance of and the need for this legislation. I commend you on your support for the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act of 1997. I strongly hope you will give the Haitians who have settled in North Carolina and become an important part of our community an equal opportunity to succeed.

Sincerely,

Alison M. Brown
Attorney at Law

cc: via facsimile to (919) 856-4161

August 28, 1998

The Honorable Lauch Faircloth
310 New Bern Avenue, Suite 120
Raleigh, NC 27601

Re: The Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1998 (Amendment No. 3368 to S.2312)

Dear Senator Faircloth:

The undersigned representatives of North Carolina organizations write to ask you to support the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1998 and to keep it attached without dilution as Amendment #3368 to the Senate version of the Treasury-Postal appropriations bill (S. 2312) in the upcoming House-Senate Conference.

This legislation is necessary to grant immigration relief to Haitians who fled the repression and political instability in their country after the coup d'etat of 1991. These Haitians who will receive relief have sought protection from persecution. Haitians fled one of the most repressive regimes in our hemisphere. Haitians who have come to the U.S. have made important contributions to the cultural diversity and economic vitality of our communities which would be the poorer for their departure. Our communities also do not need the divisiveness of unequal immigration policies.

Haitians in the U.S. contribute several times in remittances to their families in Haiti what our government grants in aid. Compelling Haitians to return would not only be unfair, it would also further destabilize the precarious Haitian economy after our government has invested substantial efforts to ensure the stability of constitutional government there. Finally, deportation would present many Haitian parents of U.S.-born children with the cruel choice of either uprooting these young citizens and taking them to a land they've never known, or breaking up their own families.

There is significant precedent for this measure. Congress enacted similar legislation for Hungarians in 1957, for Cubans in 1966, for Indochinese in 1977, for Chinese students in 1992, for Poles and Hungarians in 1996, and for Nicaraguans and Cubans in 1997. Your strong support of similar relief for Nicaraguans and Cubans in the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act last Fall is greatly appreciated. The Haitian legislation is already significantly more

restrictive than that benefitting the similarly-situated Nicaraguans and has also been revised to restrict eligibility for public benefits.

Senator Faircloth, please join your Republican colleagues Spencer Abraham, Connie Mack and Alfonse D'Amato in supporting this important legislation. As Jack Kemp put it in his letter to Speaker Gingrich, it is time to "do the right thing" by the Haitians.

Thank you very much for your kind attention and consideration of our views. We would welcome an opportunity to discuss this issue with you in person.

Respectfully,

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August 28, 1998

The Honorable Ben Nighthorse Campbell
1129 Pennsylvania Street
Denver, CO 80203

Re: The Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1998 (Amendment No. 3368 to S.2312)

Dear Senator Campbell:

The undersigned representatives of Colorado organizations write to thank you for attaching the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1998 as Amendment No. 3368 to the Senate version of the Treasury-Postal appropriations bill (S. 2311) and to ask for your support in keeping it attached and undiluted in the upcoming House-Senate Conference.

This legislation is necessary to grant immigration relief to Haitians who fled the repression and political instability in their country after the coup d'etat of 1991. These Haitians who will receive relief have sought protection from persecution. Haitians fled one of the most repressive regimes in our hemisphere. Haitians who have come to the U.S. have made important contributions to the cultural diversity and economic vitality of our communities which would be the poorer for their departure. Our communities also do not need the divisiveness of unequal immigration policies.

Haitians in the U.S. contribute several times in remittances to their families in Haiti what our government grants in aid. Compelling Haitians to return would not only be unfair, it would also further destabilize the precarious Haitian economy after our government has invested substantial efforts to ensure the stability of constitutional government there. Finally, deportation would present many Haitian parents of U.S.-born children with the cruel choice of either uprooting these young citizens and taking them to a land they've never known, or breaking up their own families.

There is a significant precedent for this measure. Congress enacted similar legislation for Hungarians in 1957, for Cubans in 1966, for Indochinese in 1977, for Chinese students in 1992, for Poles and Hungarians in 1996, and for Nicaraguans and Cubans in 1997. This legislation is already significantly more restrictive than that benefitting similarly-situated Nicaraguans last year and has been revised to restrict eligibility for public benefits.

...helping people of all faiths

Senator Campbell, please join your Republican colleagues Spencer Abraham, Connie Mack and Alfonse D'Amato in championing this important legislation. As Jack Kemp put in his letter to Speaker Gingrich, it is time to "do the right thing" by the Haitians.

Thank you very much for your kind attention and consideration of our views. We would welcome an opportunity to discuss this issue with you in person.

Respectfully,

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