



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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May 9, 2017

Honorable John F. Kelly
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20016

Dear Secretary Kelly:

We write to urge you to exercise your authority under the Immigration and Nationality Act to extend Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Haitian nationals who have been residing in the United States and benefitting from such status.

The impact of TPS for Haitians on U.S. society and its economy includes:

- Each year, Haitian TPS holders contribute nearly \$280 million to the gross domestic product. Over the course of 10 years, those contributions add up to nearly \$2.8 billion in GDP.
- Ending TPS for Haitians without a transition plan would reduce Social Security and Medicare contributions by \$42 million per year and create nearly \$60 million in employee turnover costs.

Additionally, Haiti and the United States are important trading partners (with Haiti ranked number 78 among our country's trading partners), with significant recent increases in imports and exports and a United States' trading surplus exceeding \$100 million year-to-date.

Through TPS, our country has been committed to providing a safe haven to individuals unable to securely return to their home country due to ongoing environmental disasters and violence that have severely impacted their country. On January 12, 2010, Haiti was hit by a 7.0 magnitude earthquake causing massive devastation throughout the country. The earthquake is estimated to have directly affected 3,000,000 people, nearly one-third of Haiti's population. In addition, the earthquake destroyed government buildings, hospitals, schools, and vital aid offices, including the United Nations' mission headquarters. Haiti, to this day, continues to rebuild from this debilitating earthquake.


Other disasters have befallen Haiti since the 2010 earthquake. Haiti has suffered a cholera outbreak that is responsible for the deaths of, to date, over 9,500 Haitians. Additionally, Hurricane Matthew, the worst hurricane to hit the county in over 50 years, made landfall on October 4, 2016. Hurricane Matthew took the lives of over 1,000 Haitians, and directly affected more than 2.1 million more. The hurricane was responsible for the internal displacement of 175,000 people and left 1.4 million in need of urgent humanitarian aid.

It is estimated that Hurricane Matthew resulted in damage that will cost Haiti \$1 billion, or about 11.4 percent of its gross domestic product. This includes extensive damage to Haiti's roadways, bridges, buildings and critical infrastructure. Additionally, Hurricane Matthew resulted in tremendous destruction of Haiti's agricultural sector, with crop losses estimated at \$360 million.


It is within the context of the terrible damage wrought by Hurricane Matthew that Haiti continues its efforts to rebuild from the 2010, 7.0 magnitude earthquake, and to recover from the Cholera outbreak of the same year.

The United States remains steadfast in assisting Haiti with its democratic development and providing necessary assistance for reconstruction, development, and humanitarian relief. Given the continued critical conditions in Haiti, we urge your administration to extend the TPS designation, within all applicable rules and regulations, for Haitian nationals who are currently living in, and contributing to, our great country.

Sincerely,



Barbara Sharief
Mayor


Beam Furr
Vice Mayor


Dale V.C. Holness
Commissioner


Nan Rich
Commissioner


Mark D. Bogen
Commissioner


Michael Udine
Commissioner


Chip LaMarca
Commissioner


Steve Geller
Commissioner


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