

Dr. Steve Gallon III, Board Member

SUBJECT: URGE PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP AND THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY TO EXTEND TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS FOR HAITIAN NATIONALS

COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: INFORMED, ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS

On January 15, 2010, the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Haitian nationals who were in the United States as of January 12, 2010, the date of the devastating earthquake in Haiti. Through TPS, the United States has provided a safe haven to individuals from Haiti as well as other countries who are unable to return to their home country because of insurmountable environmental obstacles, deadly diseases and violence. The TPS designation allows eligible Haitian nationals to continue living and working in the United States temporarily. TPS was initially made available to Haitian nationals for 18 months - from January 12, 2010 to July 22, 2011. On July 23, 2011, Haiti's TPS designation was extended and redesignated for an additional 18 months. The latest extension of TPS for Haitian nationals occurred on January 23, 2016, and expires on July 22, 2017.

Haiti has not yet recovered from the 2010 earthquake. The nation continues to suffer from economic and political crises; rampant Zika and Chikungunya; the effects of a devastating cholera epidemic that have killed 10,000 people and sickened 900,000 more; and most recently, the destructive effects of Hurricane Matthew that cost Haiti \$2.7 billion.

On October 4, 2016, Hurricane Matthew was the first Category 4 hurricane to hit Haiti in more than fifty years. Affecting more than 2 million Haitians, leaving at least 1.4 million of them in need of emergency aid, killing 1,000, rendering more than 800,000 extremely food insecure, and leaving 1.25 million Haitians - including a half-million children - without safe water, Hurricane Matthew also wiped out livestock and crops in broad areas, damaged or destroyed almost 1,700 schools, dramatically increased the number of cholera cases in Haiti, and left entire towns destroyed and cut off from the outside world by flooding and damage.

Nearly six months later, the United Nations estimates that hundreds of thousands of Haitians remain "extremely food insecure," some have died as a result of malnutrition, and thousands may starve to death in what experts describe as a looming humanitarian disaster. In "Desperate Haitians living in caves, eating toxic plants in post-hurricane Haiti," by Jacqueline Charles, Miami Herald, March 24, 2017, Food for the Poor's President/CEO is quoted as saying, "They have no food. They have no water. They have no shelter...It really is a crime against humanity."

Such reports are many and proliferating, indicating a worsening humanitarian crisis affecting hundreds of thousands of Haitians with which Haiti's government is unable to cope. The 50,000 Haitians with TPS have been in the US for at least six and a half years, the vast majority since well before the January 2010 earthquake, and have strong community ties including families with U.S.-born, American-citizen children enrolled in schools. The \$1.3 billion per year in remittances sent to Haiti from Haitians in the U.S. is crucial to sustaining hundreds of thousands of loved ones back home in Haiti. The United Nations has raised barely \$2 million of its \$400 million minimum goal to fight cholera in Haiti.

Haiti's government is in no position to insure safety to or assimilate the 50,000 Haitians with TPS, nor to make up for their remittances should they be curtailed by their deportation, and it remains unsafe to deport them. Their deportation would consequently tend to destabilize Haiti, which is contrary to the national security interest of the United States. There continue to be extraordinary and temporary conditions that prevent Haitian nationals from safely returning to Haiti, and therefore TPS should be extended for an additional 18 months.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. STEVE GALLON III:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to urge President Donald Trump and Secretary of Homeland Security John F. Kelly to extend Temporary Protected Status for Haitian nationals for at least another 18-month period.