



J WILLIE DAVID, III
President

FLORIDA CIVIL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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February 6, 2009

President Barack H. Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

RE: Designating Haiti For Temporary Protected Status "TPS"

Dear President Obama:

On behalf of the Florida Civil Rights Association, its Haitian members and supporters, I write to ask the Honorable Barack Obama, the 44th President of the United States to issue a historic executive order designating the country of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for a period of eighteen months. The Florida Civil Rights Association has a long history of advocating for civil and human rights on behalf of Haitian nationals living in the State of Florida.

OUR MISSION

The Florida Civil Rights Association mission is to advance diversity, equal opportunity and fairness for all people by eliminating prejudice and discrimination in the public and private sectors. The current US Immigration Policy has a discriminatory effect on Haitian nationals residing in America.

THE FRONTLINE

We have consistently been at the forefront of representing Haitian issues. We were there to support former **Governor Jeb Bush** when he decided to appoint the first Haitian Secretary of Health. We were there when a little Haitian boy (Daniel Decembre) severely mauled by a dangerous pit bull on school grounds and you Governor Crist responded to my request by championing a controversial \$1.8 million Claims Bill for long term medical treatment. We were there advising **Laurent Prosper Haitian Consul** in Orlando of our advocacy on behalf of the family of former Haitian Secretary of State Frantz Leandre (former Diplomat) and his wife who were killed in an unnecessary police pursuit that resulted in a \$1.75 million settlement by Orange County Sheriff. We were also there leading a historic march through downtown Orlando of 25,000 immigrants seeking immigration reform. We were there with **Fritz Belizarie Minister of Sports** when their national soccer hero, Manno Sano died in Orlando. We were there organizing community events with the **League of Haitian Pastors** to support Haiti's Hurricane flood victims. We were there offering our assisting to **Ralph Latortue Haitian Consul General** in Miami to obtain thousands of portable classrooms from Florida's school districts to help rebuild Haiti. Now, we join the frontline with Haitian President Rene Preval, US Congressional members, Religious and Community Leaders urgent call for TPS for Haitian nationals in America.

MEETING WITH FORMER HAITIAN PRIME MINISTER



FCRA President J Willie David, III (L) and Former Haitian Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis (R)

Sunday, December 7, 2008, I met with former Haiti's Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis in Orlando to discuss the many challenges the people of Haiti face. The former Haitian Prime Minister spoke of an urgent need to rebuild the Republic of Haiti. The Prime Minister also stated the Haitian government is making good progress on behalf of its people, doing so in partnership with the international community; that is providing security and stability through MINUSTAH. The ongoing partnership with the United States is providing opportunities for economic development, through the HOPE program for Haiti. Temporary Protected Status and rebuilding a stabilized Haiti were also top concerns which will be addressed in ongoing communication with the Prime Minister and FCRA.

EXECUTIVE ACTION

Mr. President the Florida Civil Rights Association is requesting you to take executive action by granting Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Haitian immigrants currently residing in the United States. It is time for the United States Government to end its double-standard immigration policies against Haitian nationals. There are currently six countries that are protected under the TPS provision: Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Burundi, Somalia, and Sudan, all of which have obtained status renewal because the Department of Homeland Security has determined that the country in question is unable to handle the return of its nationals due to national disasters. Meanwhile, under equally dire situations, Haitian migrants have not received similar treatment from the United States.

The designation of TPS permits nationals of Haiti living in the United States to reside legally and qualify for work permits.

JANUARY 1, 1804 / History of Haiti

On January 1, 1804, Haiti, located in the West Indies, made history by being the first Black Country to gain its independence. The poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, Haiti has been plagued by political violence for most of its history.

It is not widely known, however the efforts of Haiti to secure its independence from colonial rule began in 1791 which began as a slave revolt and ultimately succeed in prevailing over the resources of the French Empire allowing Haitians to form a government of Western Hemisphere. Many key figures in the Haitian War of Independence gained military experience and political insights through their participation and volunteered to fight in the Revolutionary War in Savannah, Georgia in defense of America. Haitians have made significant contributions to American history throughout the years.

JANUARY 1, 1863 / Role of President Lincoln

The Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves. The Proclamation was issued in two parts. The first part, issued on September 22, 1862, was a preliminary announcement outlining the intent of the second part, which officially went into effect on January 1, 1863, during the second year of the Civil War. It was Abraham Lincoln's declaration that all slaves would be permanently freed in all areas of the Confederacy that had not already returned to federal control by January 1863.

THE REASONS FOR GRANTING TPS

This request is being made based on the continued armed conflicts, political unrest and most recently the impact from the four deadly storms, hurricane Ike and Gustav, tropical storms Fay and Hanna. I am sure you are aware of the massive land slides and flooding which has resulted in over 500 deaths. The country infrastructure is crumbling and over 10,000 homes have been destroyed and left its people homeless.

It is believed that granting the TPS would cause a boatlift that would cause many to flee Haiti for the United States; however since TPS is only available to Haitians already in the U.S. then this would not occur. In 1997 President Clinton granted Deferred Enforcement Departure (DED) to Haiti and also when the country had an increase in political violence and no exodus occurred.

Mr. President, you have an opportunity now in our lifetime to have a historic impact on America and the State of Florida by issuing an executive order ending the government's double-standard against Haitian nationals residing in the United States.

President Obama the time is now for the United States to recognize and honor Haitians contribution to America's independence by signing an executive order granting TPS to Haitian nationals currently in the United States.

Mr. President, the struggles of the Haitian people have gone unnoticed for far too long, and they have been deemed invisible. It is time to recognize the urgent need for TPS, as Haiti meets the requirements as outlined in this and numerous other pleas to our government.

As an African American Civil Rights Leader I am committed to be the voice of the Haitian community until a bridge of inclusiveness is established. I am humbled to be recognized by the Haitian community as their Honorary Ambassador addressing issues of their concern.

I hope that your administration not to miss this historic opportunity to assure that our humanitarian efforts and foreign policy extend well beyond food and temporary assistance by designating Haiti for Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

Mr. Obama, I congratulate you on your new job as President of the United States and look forward to working with your administration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Willie David, III'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

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