



March 06, 2018

Dear Senator Rubio,

We write to you urgently as individuals and organizations serving the Haitian-American community in Florida to urge you to support the reallocation of United Nations (UN) credits to the United States to the UN's cholera response in Haiti during the ongoing Appropriations Bill negotiations.

As you know, the Senate Appropriations Committee unanimously approved the authorization of \$11.75 million for this purpose in the 2018 Department of State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill (S.1780, p.16, 2017). Your leadership in Congress on UN cholera accountability has been instrumental in securing critical progress to date. We ask you to continue your efforts on behalf of our families and friends in Haiti by urging the leadership of both chambers' Appropriations Sub-Committees on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs, especially Senator Graham and Representative Rogers, to ensure that the cholera funding provision is included in the final appropriations bill.

As you know, cholera was introduced to Haiti in 2010 by reckless waste disposal on a UN peacekeeping base. The epidemic has so far killed over 10,000 Haitians and sickened over 800,000. Cholera has devastated Haiti's poorest communities, leaving families who lost breadwinners destitute and children orphaned. The Haitian diaspora in the United States has carried a heavy burden to care for sick and surviving family members. Haitian-Americans visiting family in Haiti are also among those who have contracted this disease and died. The epidemic continues to ravage Haiti today and still spikes following large rainfall events, such as during Hurricanes Irma and Matthew. Cholera poses a particularly urgent threat to the 50,000 Haitians who will be forced to return to Haiti following the recent rescission of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haiti, a designation that you fought to extend.

We were pleased that the UN finally acknowledged its responsibility for the cholera outbreak and launched a "New Approach to Cholera in Haiti" in December 2016; we thank you for your engagement that pushed the UN to this point. A \$400-million plan to end cholera transmission and provide material assistance to those most directly affected, the New Approach has the potential to put an end to the cholera epidemic and allow destitute families to recover from the devastation cholera has caused. To become a reality, however, the New Approach requires funding from UN Member States. While 31 countries have contributed so far, the United States is not among them. Given U.S. leadership at the UN and on Haiti-related issues, the reluctance of our government to fund its share of the New Approach has led to a broader chilling effect in fundraising. The UN recently stressed that eliminating cholera is possible by the end of 2018, but warns that if funding is not assured, another outbreak may result.

As Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere and a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, we hope that you will seize this concrete, time sensitive opportunity to ensure that Haitians benefit from the New Approach. The Senate Appropriations Committee's authorization, within the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill, to apply UN credits to support the UN's cholera response in Haiti does not constitute a new appropriation, but rather ensures that leftover peacekeeping funds contribute to a more healthy and stable Haiti and a more accountable UN. As the House and Senate Sub-Committees on State and Foreign Operations negotiate the way forward on a final bill, we urge you to champion the importance of this authorization to Senator Graham and Representative Rogers to ensure that it is maintained in the final bill.

Once again, thank you for your continued support to the victims of cholera in Haiti. Securing a U.S. contribution to the cholera response is a matter of critical importance to us and the Haitian-American Community in Florida. We respectfully ask you to strongly champion this cause as part of your continued leadership on issues of importance to our community.

Respectfully yours,

Organizations

1. 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, Monica Russo, Executive Vice President, Florida Region
2. Americans for Immigrant Justice, Cheryl Little, Executive Director, Miami, FL
3. Center for Multicultural Wellness and Prevention, Inc., Marie-Jose Francois, MD, MPH, CHES, President/CEO, Orlando, FL
4. Center for Self Sufficiency, Edeline Mondestin, President, Miami, FL
5. Coalition of Immokalee Workers, Lucas Benitez, Co-Founder, Immokalee, FL
6. SEIU Florida State Council, Monica Russo, President
7. Collective Solidarity Towards Cholera Victims, Jimy Mertune, President, Orlando, FL
8. Excelsior Theatrical Group, Mireille Manuel, President, Miami, FL
9. Fanm Ayisyen Nan Miyami, Inc., Marleine Bastien, MSW, LCSW, Executive Director, Miami, FL
10. Florida Immigrant Coalition, Maria Rodriquez, Executive Director, Miami, FL

11. Florida Student Power Network, David Caicedo, State Director, Orlando, FL
12. Friends of Miami-Dade Detainees, Bud Conlin, Coordinator, Miami, FL
13. Haiti First, Justin Manuel, President, Miami, FL
14. Palm Beach County Coalition for Immigrant Rights, Jill Hanson, Board Member, Palm Beach, FL
15. Sant La, Haitian Neighborhood Center, Inc, Gepsie M. Metellus, Executive Director, Miami, FL
16. SEIU Florida Public Services Union, Alphonso Mayfield, President, Palm Beach, FL
17. Sosyete Koukouy, Jean Marie Denis, President, Miami, FL
18. WeCount!, Jonathan Fried, Executive Director, Homestead, FL

Individuals

19. Bradford E. Brown, PhD, Miami, FL
20. Dotie Joseph, Attorney at Law and Candidate for Florida State Representative, District 106, Miami, FL
21. Dr. Idler Bonhomme, Chairman, Greater Haitian American Chamber of Commerce, Orlando, FL, and Clinical Director, Fyzical Therapy & Balance Center, Orlando, FL.
22. Olicier Pieriche, Representative, Collective Solidarity Towards Cholera Victims, and former Minister for Haitians Living Abroad (MHAVE), Government of Haiti, Orlando, FL
23. Reina Maria Ramirez, Manager, Immigration Services Express, LLC, Hialeah, FL
24. Romane Petit Joseph, Senior Organizer, UniteHere-Local 355, Miami, FL