

Text

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 15, 2014

Senator Simon Dieuseul Desras
President, Senate of Haiti

Dear Senator Desras:

As members of the United States Congress and as longtime friends of Haiti, we write to express our concern over the continued delay in the holding of critical elections this year in Haiti.

As elected representatives of the Haitian people, we are sure you and your colleagues share the conviction that free, fair, and credible elections are an indispensable tenet of any democracy. Haitians, like all citizens in a democracy, have a right to express their will through regular and timely elections for their government representatives. That is why we are deeply concerned that the Haitian Senate has been unable to pass the requisite legislation to authorize elections this year. We believe that Haitians deserve better than to have this fundamental democratic right continually delayed. We are deeply concerned that should the protracted political impasse continue, Haiti's standing as a stable democracy could be at risk. This could have grave consequences, potentially reversing progress made in recent years and impeding the kind of development Haiti needs so badly.

We respectfully are writing to you, because we believe you can help end the impasse in the Senate by supporting the formation of a quorum to move the stalled elections legislation forward. It is in this spirit that we urge you to take a leadership role in passing the stalled elections legislation.

As advocates for Haiti in our own Congress, we pledge to work closely with your government and international partners to support free, fair and transparent elections. The Obama Administration ensures us that it will work with your government and international donors to support independent election monitoring to help ensure a fair election process for all candidates. But first, legislation must be passed to enable these elections to take place.

We urge you and your colleagues to quickly pass legislation to enable elections to take place, and we kindly ask that you share this letter and our concerns with all of your fellow Senators. We look forward to our continued collaboration in strengthening the U.S. – Haitian partnership. Thank you very much for your attention to this important matter.

The Honorable Simon Dieuseul Desras
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Sincerely,

Eliel L. Eugey
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Bill Nelson
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List of Co-Signers

1. Rep. Eliot L. Engel (D-NY), Ranking Member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs
2. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Chairman, House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Middle East and Central Asia
3. Rep. Gregory W. Meeks (D-NY)
4. Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL)
5. Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL)
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7. Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA), Chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs
8. Rep. Albio Sires (D-NJ), Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere
9. Matt Salmon (R-AZ), Chairman, House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere
10. Rep. Nita M. Lowey (D-NY), Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs
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13. Rep. Frederica S. Wilson (D-FL)
14. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL)
15. Rep. John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI), Ranking Member, House Committee on the Judiciary