



**For Immediate Release**

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**For More Information Contact:**

Joyce Jones, Communications Director

202.225.4506 (office)

202.578.0634 (mobile)

**House Democrats and Republicans Urge President Obama to Postpone Haitian Deportations**

More than 50 Democratic and Republican House lawmakers from 20 states, the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands have joined Congresswoman Frederica S. Wilson on a letter to President Obama urging his administration to reconsider a decision to deport undocumented Haitians back to their troubled nation.

Since the 2010 earthquake that devastated Haiti, killed more than 200,000 people and left 2.3 million homeless, undocumented Haitians have temporarily been allowed to stay in the United States without a visa. Following a wave of Haitian refugees entering the U.S. via Brazil, the Department of Homeland Security [announced](#) last month plans to fully resume deportations of undocumented Haitian immigrants, including those with no criminal record. Congressional representatives strongly object to non-criminal deportations, which they argue would be inhumane given the island nation's struggle to recover from the earthquake and its unstable political environment. In addition, Haiti's problems have been compounded by a new wave of destruction created by Hurricane Matthew that includes infrastructure damage and the postponement of the presidential and legislative elections that were scheduled to be held on October 9.

"Haiti has made little progress in its efforts to recover from the 2010 earthquake, a task made even more difficult by Hurricane Matthew. These deportations would send thousands of law-abiding Haitians who have been able to rebuild their lives here in America to a dismal fate," said Rep. Wilson, who represents the largest Haitian population in the United States. "Most will be returning to nothing: no homes, no jobs, no futures."

In the letter to President Obama the bipartisan group of lawmakers express "strong opposition" to the deportation decision and ask that a more humane approach be taken.

"As members of Congress, we understand and share your commitment to enforcing our nation's immigration laws," they wrote. "However, we believe this can be done in a more humane manner. Given Haiti's vulnerable state and lingering challenges, we respectfully request that you reconsider this decision and ensure that undocumented Haitians are provided full and fair asylum hearings, effective assistance of counsel, and information on all forms of relief."

To read the letter in its entirety, click [here](#).

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*Congresswoman Frederica S. Wilson is a third-term Congresswoman from Florida representing parts of Northern Miami-Dade and Southeast Broward counties. A former state legislator and school principal, she is the founder of the 5000 Role Models for Excellence Project, a mentoring program for young males at risk of dropping out of school. Congresswoman Wilson also founded the Florida Ports Caucus, a bipartisan taskforce that coordinates federal action in support of Florida's harbors and waterways. The Florida lawmaker sits on the House Education and the Workforce Committee and is the Ranking Democrat on the Subcommittee on Workforce Protections.*