

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 23, 2010

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary
United States Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton,

We write to you out of our mutual interest and vital concern for the United States' role in the reconstruction of Haiti. We applaud your leadership and the urgency of the United States response, particularly through the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development, immediately after the January 12th earthquake.

Earlier this month, we traveled to Haiti on a codel led by Senator Landrieu. We were joined by Congresswomen Debbie Wasserman Schultz and Sheila Jackson Lee and Delegate Eleanor Holmes-Norton. The purpose of our codel was to investigate the status and needs of children in Haiti. We now have a better understanding of the daunting task ahead and the importance of our country's continued leadership.

The purpose of this letter is three fold: first, to share our findings from our codel; second, to reiterate our dire concern that children and families are not forgotten during the reconstruction process; and third, as members of the Senate Appropriations and Senate Foreign Relations Committees, respectively, to inform you of our work as legislation and supplemental appropriations related to Haiti move through the Senate.

While in Haiti, we had a number of informative meetings with leaders in the Haitian Government, including President Rene Preval and the First Lady Elisabeth Delatour Preval, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Social Affairs and the Minister of Education. Additionally, we visited a field hospital, spontaneous settlement tent camp, a child-friendly space and two orphanages. What we observed and learned during the codel reinforced our simple but compelling convictions that all U.S.-led reconstruction efforts must build and strengthen families (i.e. through wrap-around social support, jobs and quality education); that Haitian children are best served in and through families (not in institutions); and building a quality, publically funded

free school system for all Haitian children should be a U.S. priority. We have attached a copy of our trip report, which further details the goals and findings of our recent codel.

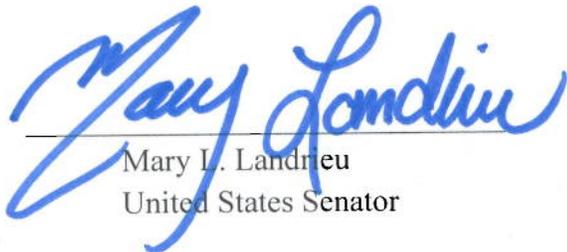
Children and families must not be overlooked in the U.S. reconstruction efforts. At the Donors Conference on March 31st, the U.S. indicated that it will focus its funding and efforts on four pillars: Security, Health, Energy and Agriculture. While we recognize the need for the U.S. to focus on specific sectors, it is our understanding that these pillars were identified prior to the earthquake in a strategic plan that the Department of State developed in coordination with the Preval Administration. This pre-earthquake determination of United States' priorities disregards some of the most important issues that have come to light in the wake of the earthquake — namely, that Haiti's children account for over 50% of the population; there were over 300,000 children living without family in Haiti prior to the earthquake; about 1.26 million children were impacted by the earthquake, exacerbating child separation and vulnerability; social support services for families are essentially nonexistent; and the conditions of orphanages and many schools in Haiti are deplorable and in disrepair.

As you may be aware, over half of school aged children were not in school prior to the earthquake, and 80% of the primary schools in Haiti are non-public or private. Some experts estimate that poor families spend up to 40% of their annual income on education. Unfortunately, there is no correlation between the quality of schools and the cost to the families. Nonetheless, with U.S. leadership during the reconstruction, public schools can become the cornerstone for communities by providing wrap-around services for children and adults and much needed family support services (health clinics, literacy, vocational training, and nutritional support). We strongly urge you to consider adding education and rebuilding schools as the 5th pillar for the U.S. efforts in Haiti in coordination with our global partners and the Government of Haiti.

In our roles as members of the Senate Foreign Relations Appropriations Subcommittee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee, respectively, we are working diligently to ensure that Congress provides you and President Obama with the resources needed to support the rebuilding of Haiti. We commend your pledge to work in partnership with the Government of Haiti, as well as the international community in crafting and delivering U.S. assistance. We have also been working with the Organization of American States (OAS), InterAmerican Development Bank (IDB), the Haitian Diaspora and a growing coalition of Members of Congress who are advocates for education and children issues to ensure that families and children are not left out of the process. We are committed to ensuring that legislative language reflecting the precept that children should be served in and through families and that education is one of the most important investment the U.S. can make in Haiti will be included in authorizing language the Senate Foreign Relation Committee's may consider in its "Haiti bill," the Haiti supplemental and the FY2011 Senate State and Foreign Operations Subcommittee bill.

We appreciate your attention to these important issues and would like the opportunity to meet with you privately to discuss and identify how we can best work together in our respective capacities.

Sincerely, we are



Mary L. Landrieu
United States Senator



Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator

Encl: Codel Landrieu Trip report

Cc: Dr. Rajiv Shah
Administrator, United States Agency for International Development

The Honorable John Kerry
Chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee

The Honorable Richard Lugar
Ranking Member, Senate Foreign Relations Committee

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman, Subcommittee on State Department, Foreign Operations & Related Agencies

The Honorable Judd Gregg
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on State Department, Foreign Operations & Related Agencies

TRIP OVERVIEW: CODEL LANDRIEU TO HAITI

Office of Senator Mary L. Landrieu

April 21, 2010

Focus and Purpose of Codel

Senators Landrieu and Gillibrand and Congresswoman Holmes-Norton traveled to Haiti on April 5, 2010. Congresswomen Debbie Wasserman-Schultz and Sheila Jackson Lee joined Senator Landrieu on April 6, 2010. Ms. Michele Bond, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State accompanied the delegation. The four chief goals of the trip were to investigate:

- The status of the educational and child welfare systems in Haiti;
- The status of Haiti's orphans and other vulnerable children;
- The work of the international community and the Haitian government to improve the welfare of children and their families in Haiti; and
- The Government of Haiti's capacity and priorities for reconstruction.

Findings of Codel

Based on the trip and associated briefings, we have the following suggestions to present:

- The U.S. would be wise to respond to the call of Haitian leaders to make universal, primary and secondary education a priority in the reconstruction of Haiti. Although Canada and France have indicated an interest in providing the leadership to help build Haiti's education system, the U.S. has an important and critical role to play in this area. Communities in the U.S. have vast experience with innovative educational models, particularly full service schools that provide health, nutrition and support services to children and families. Such community school models, especially in rural areas, will be instrumental in drawing Haitians out of Port-Au-Prince to begin decentralization of the overpopulated capital, a high priority for the Haitian government.

We are aware of an education proposal spearheaded by the InterAmerican Development Bank (IDB) and the First Lady of Haiti Elisabeth Delatour Preval which includes a 5 year plan to build a quality publically funded school system in Haiti. The IDB and the First Lady indicated the need for U.S. support. We strongly encourage the U.S. to work in partnership with IDB and the Government of Haiti to implement this plan.

Additionally, a particular issue of concern is the uncertainty of funding for the Programme Haitien d'Appui à la Reforme de l'Education (PHARE) project. From my

understanding this is USAID's primary education project at this time in Haiti. We learned that PHARE's U.S. implementing partner, American Institutes of Research (AIR), would not receive the remaining \$10.7million of its original grant award to implement PHARE and that funding would be reprogrammed by USAID. We strongly encourage USAID to restore full funding to AIR and PHARE to accomplish its mission of rebuilding schools in Haiti and building the technical assistance of the Ministry of Education.

Since many poor families spend up to 20%-40% of their annual income on education for their children, the creation of a free primary and secondary school system could also help address child abandonment issues tied to poverty. The U.S. should lend its experience and expertise to Haiti's reconstruction by contributing to the creation of the first publically funded free, quality education school system in Haiti—making school accessible for all Haitian children.

- As we know, children are best raised **in families** not institutions, no matter how well-run the institution. Unfortunately, hundreds of thousands of Haiti's four million children languish in orphanages, crèches and many other unlicensed informal situations. The process of deinstitutionalization will be a long one but it should begin now. The U.S. should coordinate with international partners like the Organization of American States (OAS) to encourage the Government of Haiti to strengthen its National Archives and Office of National Identification to efficiently record births, register and issue identification cards to youth and issue birth certificates to all children in Haiti. Promoting policies that prevent child abandonment will also be necessary. The issuance of birth certificates will lay the foundation for a basic legal framework for a modern child welfare system which will help prevent abandonment and facilitate the promotion of domestic and international adoption. Investing in schools, literacy, families and jobs will also help.
- Haiti's children are too often left vulnerable to the "restavek" system of child labor. The US must encourage the Government of Haiti to examine the extent of child abuse in this system, develop a new more effective approach to eliminate the restavek system and provide support to the Government of Haiti to enforce these policies consistently and effectively.
- The U.S. should provide technical and capacity building assistance to the Government of Haiti at national and provincial levels to develop a basic level of service, particularly as it relates to providing water, sanitation, housing, education and general infrastructure.
- The US should provide direct financial assistance to health operations underway led by the Miami-based team of medical professionals at Project MediShare.
- The U.S., through USAID, should increase its efforts in coordinating the work of NGOs and contractors to ensure that these entities include a strategy for training local Haitian partners and employees to increase local capacity and technical knowledge. Additionally, USAID should coordinate with international NGOs to be more effective in assisting with the recovery and rebuilding efforts in Haiti.

DAY 1

April 5: Codel Participants: Senator Landrieu, Senator Gillibrand, Deleg. Eleanor Holmes Norton, DAS Michele Bond

April 5: Briefing by USG officials

The delegation was briefed by Lieutenant General P.K. Keen, Consul General Donald Moore, USAID Mission Director Carleene Dei, and US Response Coordinator Chris Milligan.

- The number of displaced is: 700,000 in Port-au-Prince, 600,000 in the countryside, and 750 spontaneous settlements.
- There are between 9,000 to 37,000 people in areas at risk for flooding.

April 5: Meeting at the Presidential Palace

The delegation met with Haitian President Preval, First Lady Elisabeth Delatour and President's Economic Advisor Gabriel Verret.

- Haiti's operating budget was approximately \$1 billion per year, with 25% of that devoted to education.
- Haiti needs about \$320 million in order to maintain government functions through the end of its fiscal year, Sept. 31.

April 5: Meeting with Ministry of Social Welfare

The delegation met with Minister Yves Cristallin, the Director of Institut du bien Etre Social et de la Recherche (IBESR), Madame Jeanne Bernard Perry, Ministry Ombudswoman Florence Elic, and UNICEF representatives Francoise Gruloos and Caroline Bakker, Sub Regional Child Protection Advisor.

- Of a population of approximately 9.7 million, only 3% of Haitians are covered by social insurance (1980 census), 10% of Haitians, or about 800,000 people, had a disability.

April 5: Meeting with Haitian Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive

Senator Landrieu and the Prime Minister met privately to discuss the priorities and obstacles of the Government of Haiti for reconstruction efforts and to discuss the goals of the CODEL.

April 5: Visit to Rose Mina Orphanage

The orphanage's Executive Director Osvaldo Fernandez hosted the delegation. The delegation saw the 77 children living at the orphanage.

DAY 2

April 6: Codel Participants: Senator Landrieu, Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman-Schultz, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee

April 6: Visit to Temporary Emergency School Site

The delegation toured three public primary schools reopening after the earthquake in temporary shelters. The respective directors of the schools provided guided tours for the delegation. After the tour, the delegation convened a roundtable of education specialists and education based NGOs. The Minister of Education Jean Pierre provided brief remarks.

- 85% of basic schools are unregulated with little or no oversight from the Ministry of Education. Haiti's net university enrollment rate is less than 1% -- the lowest in the Western Hemisphere.
- The earthquake destroyed an estimated 4,200 schools as well as the Ministry of Education building: an estimated 302,000 children have been displaced to other departments and an additional 720,000 children affected by the earthquake remain in their home communities. Of this figure, 309,500 children are currently living in spontaneous temporary settlement sites which lack basic social services.
- Education costs are about 40% for low income families. Public schools cover only 15-20% of the total demand for basic education. 22% of children (400,000) aged 6-11 are not in school. Over 500,000 marginalized Haitian youth with no education remain excluded from productive activities in society and are subject to recruitment by gangs.

April 6: Visit to St. Therese Child Friendly Space

The delegation was joined by Archbishop Bernadito Auza (Ambassador from the Vatican to Haiti). The delegation met with camp leaders and UNICEF staff. The delegation toured the Child Friendly Space and the adjoining 4,000 person temporary spontaneous settlement camp.

April 6: Visit to God's Littlest Angels Orphanage

The Delegation met with Dixie Bickel, the Director of God's Littlest Angels Orphanage (GLA). Ms. Bickel provided a tour of the facility and provided background information on the services that GLA provides to Haitian children and her concerns related to UNICEF.

April 6: Visit to Project Medishare

The delegation met Dr. Barth Green co-founder of the Miami-based Project Medishare for Haiti, Inc. The delegation visited the neo-natal ward (the only neo-natal ward in a field hospital in Haiti), a ward where amputees were being fitted with skin tone compatible prosthesis, and briefly viewed a webcam interchange between local Haitians and their relatives in the US.