Your Name

Your Address

City, State Zip

Date

Representative’s Name

Representative’s Title/Office

Representative’s Address

City, State Zip

Dear [Title & Name]:

I am reaching out as your constituent and a citizen concerned about our foreign policy towards our southern neighbor Haiti.

I have long been connected to friends and partners in Haiti and am deeply concerned about the rampant violence that has paralyzed transportation, the economy, schools, and the general ability to live and work.

Gangs terrorize most parts of the capital city, and increasingly, other regions throughout the country.  School children are shot in their classrooms. Professionals are kidnapped from their homes or vehicles. Rape and violence against women and children is rising constantly. More than half of Haitian people cannot find sufficient food or clean water.  Now citizen vigilante groups are extracting rough justice by killing accused gang members, clearly not a solution, even if it does provide a brief moment of respite.

[Possible areas of special interest for you to choose to emphasize – choose one or two.]

[Immigration]

·    The Biden administration continues to deport men, women, and children who have fought to escape this unbearable environment.  We should halt deportations now.

·    Persons who have applied under the new emergency measures are waiting months to hear about any progress on their permission to enter the US.  Some are spending that time in hiding because of gang threats on their lives, under the constant fear of discovery.  Being known to have a US sponsor can make them a target for gangs.

 [A stable government]

·    The Department of State continues to support the de facto Prime Minister Ariel Henry, who with international help, became prime minister in the power vacuum left by the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse on July 7, 2021, and continues the failure of the PHTK party to organize a single election despite 13+ years in power.

·    As the U.S. government continues to push for elections  -- "free and fair elections" -- in this atmosphere,  we must acknowledge that the leadership the U.S. supports has been determined to be complicit in the ongoing atmosphere of gang violence, deterioration of institutions, and failure to foster democratic norms.

·    The U.S., having had a strong hand in guiding Haiti to where it is today, must step up with more imaginative policymaking that seeks to empower Haitians seeking solutions to this crisis, leverages international resources and international negotiating power, and stops supporting those most directly responsible for the current environment. We must do this through continued humanitarian investment, stopping deportations to the country until conditions return to a reasonably safe standard, and shifting our posture to more genuinely support negotiations of well-meaning actors in Haiti and not failed, corrupt people in positions of power.   We could and should support security for elections, but we must not interfere in the outcomes as we have in the past.

·    I urge your support for the Haiti Criminal Collusion and Transparency Act to make it more difficult for criminal gangs in Haiti to do business with entities in the United States.   [see more information at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/5083>.  This bill introduced in 2022 and currently in committee has significant bipartisan support.]

[Long-term development]

·    I urge your support for maintaining the status of Haiti as one of the first countries to be included in the Global Fragility Act.  [see more information at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/2116> in order to find out how you can best speak to this issue.]

·    USAID and the U.S. Government broadly must take seriously and move forward on their promise to support localized efforts in Haiti, including emphasizing civil society and local organizations, direct support to Haitian-led organizations, and focusing on economic empowerment locally instead of imported materials or food whenever possible.

[Gun violence and automatic weapons]

·    The illegal exportation of easily-obtained automatic weapons from the U.S. to unstable countries and criminal gangs all over the world and particularly in Haiti must stop.

[Illegal drug epidemic]

·    Interdiction of drug shipments from South America through Haiti for the U.S. street market must become a priority of the DEA.  The illegal drug trade is a primary destabilizing force in Haiti.

[Global health]

·    Malnutrition and lack of access to health care make a breeding ground for the virus of the next pandemic.  We are not healthy unless all of us are healthy.

·    Haitians are dying for lack of food and health care because they do not dare leave their homes and risk the violence on the streets.

[Children]

·    Children are starving to death and dying at the hands of violent gangs.  Our common humanity demands better.  We must find a way to act.

[Economics]

·    A rising tide floats all boats.  A stable Haiti with a working economy means business opportunities and jobs not only for Haitians but for all countries who engage in trade with Haiti.  The streets must be secured in order for the economy to come back to life.

·    Haiti’s cultural life has been a vibrant and vital piece of what makes the country a unique part of the world of creativity. We must return to a situation where the rest of the world can be enriched and inspired by and learn from the artists, sculptors, musicians, dancers, architects, and gardeners of Haiti.

Haiti is only a thousand miles away from our shores. The people are without food, electricity, fuel, means of transportation, and they are literally afraid to leave their homes. This is a humanitarian crisis of monumental proportion. The United States can obviously help if only we had the political will to do so.

There are many reasons to bring this nightmare to an end -- from broader U.S. geopolitical goals to domestic security – but also to be genuine in our claim as a country to reach out to those in need.

Sincerely,

[signature]

Your Name

Your Phone Number

Your Email Address