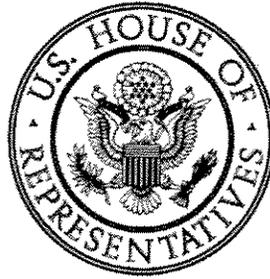


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CONGRESSMAN KENDRICK B. MEEK

February 19, 2004

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The Honorable Thomas J. Ridge
Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20016

RE: Temporary Protected Status for the Nation of Haiti

Dear Secretary Ridge:

In view of the country-wide and escalating violence, the continued loss of life and general breakdown of civil order in Haiti, I ask that you immediately use the authority granted by section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act as amended, to extend the protection of Temporary Protective Status to all Haitian nationals and their children currently in the United States so that no Haitian is forced to return to a country where his or her personal safety would be greatly at risk.

The reasons for my request are obvious even to the most casual observer. Massive demonstrations involving thousands of people have given way to open armed conflict in several cities in which up to sixty people have been killed including police and government officials. The situation is so grave that the United States Embassy in Port Au Prince has urged American citizens to immediately depart Haiti if they can safely do so, and has banned travel by embassy staff outside of the Capitol.

"Americans are reminded of the potential for spontaneous demonstrations and violent confrontations between government supporters and students and other groups that oppose the government of Haiti." [Department of State Travel Advisory, February 18, 2004]

Mr. Secretary, there can be no excuse in depriving and denying protections to those individuals who are here to hold on to life itself. The United States should offer Temporary Protected Status to those Haitians already present in the U.S.

until peace and civil order and public safety are restored. To do any less would reflect poorly on a country such as ours that prides itself on its respect for life and human rights.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kendrick B. MEEK". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

KENDRICK B. MEEK
Member of Congress