

# Press



# Release

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Legislature Supports Michel's Request to Congress to Permit Non-Immigrant Haitians to Renew VISAs on U.S. Soil**

### **Current Rule Requires Applicants Return to Port-au-Prince**

**New City, NY (July 8, 2010)** – The Rockland County Legislature approved a resolution, introduced by Legislator Jacques O. D'I Michel, which requests Congress to take steps to permit non-immigrant Haitians residing in the United States on an expired VISA to renew the VISA in the U.S. rather than requiring them to return to Haiti to complete an application and personal interview. The resolution received unanimous approval at the July 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Legislature.

"Many Haitian Nationals, as a consequence of the January earthquake, have, in effect, been exiled," said Legislator Michel. "They have nothing to return to - no home or family, only the upheaval and destruction caused by the earthquake. There remains a shortage of food and water, acceptable sanitary conditions; the transportation and communication systems are limited and medical facilities are at maximum capacity. Sending these people back will only add to the burden of the country."

"I thank my colleagues for supporting this request," said Michel, "The people of the United States and our government leaders have demonstrated their concern for the nation of Haiti through countless humanitarian gestures. This consideration would be one more act of kindness on the part of this compassionate world leader."

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