



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-3605

January 31, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of State  
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave, SE  
Washington, D.C. 2052

The Honorable Kristi Noem  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
2201 C St, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dave Weldon  
Director  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road  
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear Secretary Rubio, Secretary Noem, and Director Weldon,

I/we are writing with extreme urgency regarding the life-threatening situation facing Haitian orphans currently in the process of adoption by American families. Bureaucratic requirements currently being enforced by holdovers of the Biden Administration's Department of State are placing these children in grave and unnecessary danger amid what experts consider the most severe crisis in Haiti's modern history. Further, Mayorkas' Department of Homeland Security personnel continue to refuse to consider Humanitarian Parole options for these endangered adoptees.

The severity of the current situation cannot be overstated. Armed gangs now control 85 percent of Port-au-Prince, rendering routine travel potentially lethal. The United Nations reports 700,000 displaced persons and widespread child recruitment into gangs. The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) describes Haiti as "one of the worst places in the world for children," with gang recruitment of children increasing by 70 percent. The security situation has deteriorated so severely that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has extended flight restrictions until March 2025 due to gangs firing on American aircraft. In an unprecedented move, Doctors Without Borders suspended operations in Port-au-Prince for the first time in 30 years.

The humanitarian crisis has reached catastrophic levels. Orphanage directors report they are struggling to feed children in their care. The UN BINUH Representative describes this crisis as an existential threat to Haitian society, with children bearing the heaviest burden. The Multinational Security Support mission remains outmatched and under-resourced, failing to make progress against the gangs that terrorize the city.

Despite these extraordinary dangers, Blinken's State Department personnel in the Office of Child Issues continues to require adoptive children to travel through gang-controlled areas for in-person visa interviews and medical examinations. Medical exam costs have quadrupled to \$800, while historical data shows these examinations rarely identify health issues requiring treatment. This requirement becomes even more questionable when considering that Mayorkas' Department of Homeland Security (DHS) admitted millions of migrants across the Southwest Border without such medical requirements.

We urgently request three immediate actions from your agencies and Departments. First, waive the medical examination and vaccination requirements. Second, transition all adoptees to virtual visa interviews. Third, work with the Haitian government to permit humanitarian parole for the children who have secured Article 5 authorization from the U.S. Embassy in Port au Prince. These requests mirror successful accommodations made in April and May, which enabled 39 adoptees to safely depart Haiti. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department demonstrated flexibility by allowing telehealth assessments - similar adaptability is critically needed now.

The current situation demands immediate action. The Biden Administration repeatedly failed to act with the same sense of urgency they exhibited in April and May when process exceptions were made to rescue 39 adoptees from Haiti during a spiraling crisis. By all available metrics, conditions in Haiti are far worse now than they were in April and May. Yet Blinken's Department of State personnel continue signaling as recently as mid-January 2025 that DoS and Haitian processes are working normally. We implore you, in accordance with President Trump's support for families, to prioritize these children's safety over administrative procedures. American families are waiting to welcome these children home but every day of delay exposes them to extreme danger in Haiti. Your willingness to adapt these requirements in the face of this severe humanitarian crisis will demonstrate your recognition of the gravity of conditions on the ground and your commitment to putting children's safety at the forefront of decision-making.

Your immediate attention and response to this urgent matter is crucial.

Sincerely,



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August Pfluger  
Member of Congress



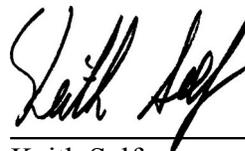
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Rick W. Allen  
Member of Congress



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Mike Flood  
Member of Congress



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Keith Self  
Member of Congress



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Jen A. Riggans  
Member of Congress



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Burgess Owens  
Member of Congress