



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

Senator Parker Calls on Nyc Congressional Delegation to Allocate \$1 Billion in Providing Aid to Haiti

KEVIN S. PARKER January 14, 2010

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SENATOR PARKER CALLS ON NYC CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO ALLOCATE \$1 BILLION IN PROVIDING AID TO HAITI

Brooklyn, NY- After a 7.0 earth quake devastated the capital of Port-Au-Prince. State Senator Kevin Parker calls on the New York Congressional Delegation to appropriate \$1 billion for use in providing aid to Haiti.

“We, as legislators and fellow New Yorkers, have a duty to ensure that humanitarian aid is delivered to the people who need it most, quickly and in sufficient quantities to aid the many hundreds of thousands of Haitian people affected by this unprecedented natural disaster”, said Senator Parker. “Therefore, I call upon the New York City’s Congressional Delegation, to draft and introduce legislation modeled on H.R. 1268 of 2005. Due to the unprecedented scope and scale of this emergency, I ask that the NYS Delegation

appropriate \$1 billion for use in providing aid to Haiti.”
Senator Kevin Parker’s letter to the New York delegation is below:

January 14, 2010

*Congressman Gary Ackerman, 5th Congr. Dist.
Congressman Gregory W. Meeks, 6th Congr. Dist.
Congressman Joseph Crowley, 7th Congr. Dist.
Congressman Jerrold Nadler, 8th Congr. Dist.
Congressman Anthony D. Weiner, 9th Congr. Dist.
Congressman Edolphus Towns, 10th Congr. Dist.
Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke, 11th Congr. Dist.
Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez, 12th Congr. Dist.
Congressman Michael McMahon, 13th Congr. Dist.
Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, 14th Congr. Dist.
Congressman Charles B. Rangel, 15th Congr. Dist.
Congressman José E. Serrano, 16th Congr. Dist.
Congressman Eliot L. Engel, 17th Congr. Dist.
Senator Charles E. Schumer
Senator Kirsten E. Gillibrand*

Dear Senators and Members of Congress:

This letter concerns the tragedy that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010 when an enormously powerful earthquake struck the capital of Port au Prince. As you know, the numbers of dead, injured, homeless are staggeringly large, and continually growing, as the Haitian government struggles to gain control over one of the largest mass disasters ever to occur in the Western Hemisphere.

New York City – specifically, my Senatorial district, as well as those of Senators Sampson and Adams – contains the largest Haitian community located outside Haiti in the world. In this time of crisis for Haiti’s people, we, as legislators and New Yorkers, have a duty to ensure that humanitarian aid is delivered to the people who need it most, quickly and in sufficient quantities to aid the many hundreds of thousands of people affected by this unprecedented natural disaster.

Americans are a generous people. From the earliest days of our country, we have always responded to help our neighbors and our neighboring countries when they were in need. However, the aid that is already flowing to Haiti will almost certainly be too little to offset the devastation wrought upon the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, which was already facing significant infrastructure problems, and widespread problems with supplying sufficient food, clothing, shelter and potable water.

I call upon you therefore, as New York City’s Congressional Delegation, to draft and introduce legislation modeled on H.R. 1268 of 2005 (the Indian Ocean Tsunami Relief bill), in which the Congress appropriated \$656 million to the President to establish the Tsunami Recovery and Reconstruction Fund. Due to the unprecedented scope and scale of this emergency, I ask that you appropriate \$1 billion for use in providing aid to Haiti.

Moreover, on behalf of the thousands of Haitian-Americans in New York, and the hundreds of thousands of affected men, women and children in Haiti, I ask that you introduce this humanitarian legislation on Tuesday, January 19th, the day after the holiday.

As you know, under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, the President has great flexibility respond to disasters with humanitarian assistance. I ask you, therefore, to the utilize the broadest reach of the United States’ powers and resources in this crisis, such as: food relief grants under public law 480 Title II (the Food for Peace program), and a Food Security Trust under public law 105-383, if necessary; financial

assistance through the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance; and, reconstruction and recovery aid through expanded USAID and, if applicable, Department of Defense Overseas Humanitarian and Disaster and Civic Aid.

The situation in Haiti is dire, and the need is great, which is why I have asked you to grant President Obama the fullest authority and flexibility with which to apply this humanitarian aid package to Haiti. He has demonstrated the thoughtfulness and strength of his leadership, and will need all of the humanitarian tools Congress can grant him.

As I noted above, Americans are a generous people. The United States is consistently one of the world's largest contributors to international disaster and humanitarian relief operations, and has spent incalculable amounts on global humanitarian emergencies, and particularly so in the last decade. We have sent aid to Central America when it was ravaged by Hurricane Mitch in 1998; the droughts in Ethiopia and Saharan and Sahelian Africa since 2002; the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004; and, the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan, to name only a few times Americans have shown our willingness to provide succor in times of need.

*Despite the economic challenges we Americans are facing together now, **now** is the time for us to show American generosity and caring, and the greatness of our spirit, by providing Haiti with the aid it needs to fight this disaster and to recover from it a stronger nation.*

*Yours in Partnership.
Kevin Parker*

cc: President Barack Obama