

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 21, 2011

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The so-called HALT Act (H.R. 2497), proposed legislation with the dubious title the "Hinder the Administration's Legalization Temptation" Act, is a direct attack on your judgment, knowledge of the law, and ability to apply the laws of the United States firmly and equitably for the benefit of the American people. We, the undersigned, want it to be absolutely, crystal clear that we stand with you against such deceitful, mean-spirited, and partisan attacks.

Regardless of our varying views on the complex issue of immigration and how to reform the current system, we feel the introduction of this legislation by leaders of the Republican Party is an attack on your integrity that should not pass unnoticed or unopposed.

The HALT Act would rescind powers granted by Congress to the Executive to target immigration enforcement resources at the worst criminals, drug dealers, gangsters, and security threats by taking away all of the prosecutorial discretion you possess under the law. It restricts the ability of our immigration enforcement system to take the particular circumstances of any individual -- or the circumstances of any particular group or nationality -- into consideration when determining who is a priority for deportation or other penalty under our immigration laws.

However, the proposed legislation would not alter the powers of the Executive Branch permanently, but rather only until the day after the next presidential inauguration, January 21, 2013. One of the authors of the bill recently wrote, "While this authority is justifiable when used responsibly on a case-by-case basis, it's clear the Obama Administration plans not to use but to abuse these powers."

Tying your hands and that of our law enforcement and border security authorities in order to score political points is a new low. It brings new meaning to the term "playing politics," but in this case has severe consequences for national security and community safety.

After the devastating earthquake in Haiti, you determined that a temporary suspension of deportations to Haiti was in the best interest of the American people and the Haitian people. You were absolutely correct in that determination, yet that power would be suspended by the new bill, if it passes, until the day after the next inauguration.

In certain circumstances, your Administration has legally set deportation or other immigration penalties aside when it is in the best interest of the American people. For example, when a deportable alien has family members that are U.S. citizens -- including active duty military -- who would face extreme hardship if a deportation went forward and the particular circumstances warrant leniency or special consideration, your Administration has made such determinations. Yet the powers you have exercised cautiously on a limited and case-by-case basis, would be suspended by the new bill, if it passes, until the day after the next inauguration.

We, the undersigned, support you in your efforts to apply the law and exercise sound judgment to determine what is in the best interest of the American people so that our nation is prosperous and safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Paul [unclear]", written over a horizontal line.A handwritten signature in blue ink, "Yvette D. Clarke", written over a horizontal line.A handwritten signature in blue ink, "Michael [unclear]", written over a horizontal line.

Emanuel

Alma Waters

William Latt

Barney F. Rob

Ed. J. Swan

Amalia

Wm Lucy Clay

Ed Pastor

James E. Cleft

Alth. R.

Hy Allen

Hay Doyne

Joetta Sanchez

Mike Quigley

Sam Lane

Jim M^cDevanott

Keith Collins

Steve Cohen

Jayna Pinter

Doris A. Zingales

Peter Welch

Harold Johnson

Judy Allen

Rand M. Gijab

Dary L. Ackerman

John Conyeff.

Sheila Jackson Lee

Howard L. Berman

Elvir L. Enger

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Gregory Meech

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Lucille Roybal-Allard

Jared Pelt

Lord D. D. D. D.

A. A.

Buller

Dennis J. Keenick

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Jim McLean

W. G. Schoen

Grace F. Neapolitano

Alfred W. Bishop Jr.

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Lynn Woolsey

Barbara Lee

Ray T. Can

Jerald Nedder

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Charles B. Rangel

Joe Baca

Jack Shultz

Gene Harris

Bob Fish

Joseph R. Crowley

David Bonior

James M. Patten

Ch

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Walter H. White

Michael E. Copeland

Bennie P. Thompson

Archie D. Smith

E. Powers

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Corine Brown

Karen Bass

Hansen

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Yvette Clarke

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