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opposing proposed policy of resuming Haitian deportations

1 message

Grace Goodman <gracegoodman@verizon.net>

Wed, Mar 16, 2011 at 8:39 PM

To: haitipolicycomments@dhs.gov

Cc: Felicia_Escobar@who.eop.gov, comments@whitehouse.gov

To Whom It may concern:

I write to oppose the proposed policy that would allow DHS/ICE to resume deporting people to Haiti.

First, this is no time to deport anybody to Haiti. It has not recovered from the tragic earthquake of last January and more recently it has been suffering a cholera epidemic. It cannot absorb any more people - especially deportees with no local ties any more, no way to support themselves, and no place to live.

Also, the proposed policy says it will focus on deporting only criminals. Haiti puts "criminals" in jails where the conditions are simply inhumane. Why would the US send human beings to such dire conditions? I understand that at least one recent deportee under this "proposed" (but obviously already implemented) policy has died from cholera that he got in the jail after he arrived. Sending anybody to the possibility of such death is not anything I could support the United States doing!

Further, although the proposed policy says it will concentrate on the worst criminals, it appears that deportations so far have simply looked to see if a Haitian has ever been convicted of any offense - with no individual case by case review to see such very relevant factors as (a) the nature of the crime - was it non-violent? a minor misdemeanor? (b) how long ago it occurred and what age the person was at the time - was it a youthful indiscretion that occurred a decade or more ago? (c) did the person serve a sentence for that crime and thus "pay his debt to society" so that he should no longer be deemed to be a "criminal" at all? (d) has the person been rehabilitated and is he/she living in a law-abiding fashion and if so, for how long? and (e) does the Haitian have a spouse and/or children who are US citizens who would be deprived of support if their parent was deported?

Without such individualized consideration, it simply makes no sense to deport anybody. The bare fact of a past criminal record does not automatically make a person any kind of "threat to society" who should be removed - certainly not removed in summary fashion, certainly not to a country like Haiti that is in such chaos.

As an American and a person of faith, I must oppose this harsh and inflexible policy on moral grounds. It is not the kind of policy that accords with my understanding of American values.

Please withdraw this proposed policy in its entirety and reinstate the policy of not deporting anybody to Haiti at the present time.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

(Ms.) Grace A. Goodman

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