

August 17, 2010



***Urge your Representatives to  
Support H.R.6021, the Haiti  
Empowerment, Assistance and  
Rebuilding Act***

## **ACTION ALERT**

**Take Action Now!** Please [contact your Representatives today](#) and urge their support for H.R. 6021 which provides a strategy and funding for long-term reconstruction and development in Haiti.

**Why is action important now?** The earthquake that devastated the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, and surrounding areas in January 2010 killed more than 200,000 people and injured over 300,000. Houses and businesses were destroyed, leaving 2 million people displaced from their homes. Haiti, the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere before the earthquake, is struggling to recover due to capacity, human, resource, and infrastructure constraints. Recent legislation introduced by Representative Conyers (MI), H.R. 6021, the *Haiti Emergency Assistance and Reconstruction (HEAR) Act*, provides an effective policy framework for long-term recovery and development efforts in Haiti and allocates generous funding over 5 years towards this goal.

**What is the Church's position?** The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the Catholic community's international relief and development agency, believe that the recovery efforts in Haiti require adoption of a strategy for long-term recovery and sustainable development that coordinates different U.S. government agencies in a comprehensive approach while engaging faith-based organizations and other groups with expertise and experience in Haiti. In a [letter of support for HR 6021](#), CRS and USCCB stated that this bill represents a serious effort to address the long-term recovery needs of the Haitian people.

**What does the situation in Haiti have to do with my Catholic faith?** Our Catholic faith calls on us to uphold the life and dignity of all human life and to be in solidarity with our brothers and sisters, especially poor and vulnerable people. The devastation in Haiti affects all of us because we are all part of the human family. As Catholics, we must take action to assist our brothers and sisters in Haiti who are struggling to recover.

**How is the Catholic Church responding to the Haiti earthquake?** In partnership with Caritas Haiti and other Catholic Church agencies, CRS has provided food, medical care, and shelter to affected populations and is helping to rebuild critical infrastructure such as water and sanitation facilities. CRS additionally supports child protection programming, which includes family tracing to reunite separated children with their families, where possible, and the pursuit of durable solutions for orphaned children. CRS is also working throughout Haiti to assist the displaced located outside of the earthquake zone, and, through agriculture and microfinance programs, to help them find the means to remain in the countryside.

In a collection taken up after the earthquake, Catholics in the United States contributed \$80 million to recovery efforts in Haiti, which is being used to provide assistance and to help restore Haiti's infrastructure, including churches, schools, and clinics. CRS and the Secretariat for the Church in Latin America of the USCCB are administering the funds, in consultation with the bishops of Haiti. USCCB and CRS are actively advocating for U.S. government policies that assist Haitians in need and promote long-term reconstruction and development.

**For more information, contact:**

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