

**MAXINE WATERS**

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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0535**

December 23, 2009

PLEASE REPLY TO:

**WASHINGTON, DC OFFICE**

2344 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0535

PHONE: (202) 225-2201

FAX: (202) 225-7854

DISTRICT OFFICES:

**LOS ANGELES OFFICE**

10124 SOUTH BROADWAY

SUITE 1

LOS ANGELES, CA 90003

PHONE: (323) 757-8900

FAX: (323) 757-9506

**WESTCHESTER OFFICE**

6033 WEST CENTURY BOULEVARD

SUITE 807

LOS ANGELES, CA 90045

PHONE: (310) 642-4610

FAX: (310) 642-9160

His Excellency René Prével  
President of Haiti  
c/o Embassy of Haiti  
2311 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20008

Your Excellency:

I am writing to express my concerns about the decision of Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) to exclude more than a dozen political parties from the Parliamentary elections scheduled for February and March 2010. I am concerned that these exclusions would violate the right of Haitian citizens to vote in free and fair elections and that it would be a significant setback to Haiti's democratic development.

As you know, I have a longstanding commitment to supporting democracy and development in Haiti. I led efforts in the United States Congress to obtain debt cancellation for Haiti. These efforts culminated in the World Bank's announcement last June that Haiti reached the "completion point" for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and would receive complete cancellation of its multilateral debts. I am also working to increase United States bilateral assistance to Haiti.

It is imperative that Haiti's next elections be free and fair and that they be perceived as free and fair. Political parties should not be excluded from an election without a legally compelling reason, determined through a transparent, impartial process.

The CEP, to my knowledge, has not provided a public, written explanation for the exclusions of the political parties from the upcoming elections. The CEP's failure to explain the justification for the political parties' exclusions for almost a month raises questions about the validity of these exclusions. The fact that the decision was made by a *provisional* CEP – one chosen by your office from a list of nominations from organizations selected by your office rather than according to the 1987 Constitution – also raises questions about the fairness of the process.

I urge you to take appropriate action to ensure that the upcoming elections in Haiti are free and fair. This includes taking appropriate action to ensure that the CEP: a) provides a complete, public explanation for the exclusions; and b) allows any political party that was excluded for anything less than a clear, compelling legal reason to fully participate in the February elections.

Please communicate with The Honorable Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State of the United States; The Honorable Eliot Engel, Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere; and myself regarding the measures you take in this matter. I look forward to continuing to work with you to support democratic development in Haiti.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maxine Waters". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maxine Waters  
Member of Congress

cc: Hon. Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State of the United States  
The Honorable Eliot Engel, Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere