

HAITI

1. **WHEREAS**, in the days since the island nation of Haiti was struck by the devastating earthquake of January 12, people across America and around the world have responded with prayers and material aid for the Haitian people; and
2. **WHEREAS**, our federal government responded decisively, quickly, and effectively, providing needed personnel and material in an effort to save as many lives as possible; and
3. **WHEREAS**, U.S. mayors responded immediately to the disaster, offering to dedicate their personnel, equipment, and other resources to the coordinated U.S. response; and
4. **WHEREAS**, The United States Conference of Mayors has a long history of providing mayors with the information they need to come to the aid of their colleagues in other cities when disasters strike, and played this role again within hours of the first reports of the devastation in Haiti; and
5. **WHEREAS**, rebuilding Haiti and the lives of the Haitian people will require a sustained commitment by the nations of the world over many years; and
6. **WHEREAS**, our federal government moved quickly to provide Temporary Protective Status to Haitian nationals in the United States at the time of the earthquake, thus allowing them to work in the U.S. and send money to their families in Haiti; and
7. **WHEREAS**, our federal government is granting humanitarian parole on an individual basis to orphaned children from Haiti so that they can enter the United States temporarily to ensure that they receive needed care, but the granting of this parole has been hampered by the emergency conditions; and
8. **WHEREAS**, an estimate of 400,000 orphans in Haiti before the disaster has been widely reported and, as a result of the earthquake, the additional Haitian children who have been orphaned and are in need of adoptive families add to the strain on an already overburdened adoption system; and
9. **WHEREAS**, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute is working closely with Members of Congress, the U.S. Departments of State and Homeland Security, and relief organizations to bring resolution to the cases of those U.S. families adopting in Haiti, as well as to direct relief to the thousands of orphans who will not be adopted by U.S. families,
10. **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that The United States Conference of Mayors pledges to continue to help America's mayors and their cities respond to Haiti's emergency needs in the months ahead, and its rebuilding needs in the years ahead; and

11. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Conference of Mayors calls on the U.S. government to continue to lead the world's response to meeting the immediate needs of the Haitian people and the long term needs of their nation; and
12. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Conference of Mayors calls on the U.S. government to do everything possible to facilitate the safe adoption of Haiti's orphaned children with no unnecessary delays; and
13. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Conference of Mayors pledges to work closely with the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute in its efforts to facilitate adoptions of Haitian orphans by U.S. families and to aid those not adopted; and
14. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Conference of Mayors calls on the U.S. Department of State to use the Haitian earthquake crisis to raise awareness of the plight of orphans throughout the world and the need to provide them with relief; and
15. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Conference of Mayors calls on the U.S. Department of State to support the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption which expresses the need for orphans to be placed in family environments.