

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 6, 2020

The Honorable Chad F. Wolf
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Acting Secretary Wolf:

I write to express my deep concern about reports of your department's continued deportation of Haitian migrants amid the rapidly-spreading and deadly COVID-19 pandemic and to urge you to immediately halt deportations for the duration of this global health crisis.

Like many of the countries that migrants are being repatriated to, Haiti lacks the public health infrastructure to prevent the spread of the virus or treat a large number of infected people. Haiti has struggled to rebuild in the aftermath of the devastating 2010 earthquake and ensuing cholera epidemic. Much of the country still [lacks access](#) to basic medical care, potable water, and soap for handwashing. It is unconscionable to repatriate migrants, who may be unwitting carriers of the virus, into such an environment.

I am especially concerned about the spread of the virus among ICE detainees given the close living conditions in ICE detention facilities, a lack of access to masks or other protective gear, and your department's [poor track record](#) of providing adequate health care to detainees. Already, [ICE detainees](#) and [employees](#) have tested positive for COVID-19 and there is a high level of risk that deported migrants will act as carriers of the virus because [nearly a fifth](#) of those that contract COVID-19 are asymptomatic. At least two detainees who were in your department's custody have reportedly [tested positive](#) for COVID-19 shortly after they were deported.

Given Haiti's ongoing challenges, including [a likely surge](#) in the number of COVID-19 infections, I urge you to immediately halt deportations and ensure that the [CDC's recommendations](#) for preventing the spread of the novel coronavirus are implemented in all facilities housing ICE detainees. Continuing irresponsible and dangerous deportations at this time will almost certainly place millions of people in countries with minimal health infrastructure at disproportionate risk for contracting and spreading COVID-19.

Sincerely,



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress