



LATIN AMERICA WORKING GROUP
ACTION AT HOME FOR JUST POLICIES ABROAD

End the Travel Ban on Cuba

Dear Friend,

We've been doing everything we can--pulling out all the stops, as they say--to restore U.S. citizens' freedom to travel to Cuba. That's why we've come to you time and time again (and time and time again), asking you to make one more email or one more phone call to your congressperson; but we've also been mobilizing new advocates and as-of-yet untapped networks throughout the country to give us the best chance of getting the job done this year, in this Congress.



Earlier this month we partnered with [Change.org](http://www.change.org), an increasingly respected voice in change-making circles, to email 100,000 people in the congressional districts where we need to make a BIG impact. We asked them to sign a petition, which was then sent via the Internet to their congressperson. The response was overwhelming. In a matter of hours, 6,000 people who had never before taken action for freedom to travel to Cuba signed the petition and joined our movement, which is gathering speed and energy every day.

We want to invite you to sign our petition on Change.org, too; you can do that here:

<http://www.change.org/petitions/view/tell-congress-restore-the-right-to-travel-to-cuba>.

Most importantly, your congressperson will receive a fresh, up-to-date message from you, their constituent; if they're smart and politically savvy, they'll be paying close attention to your opinions in the months ahead as the mid-term elections approach. You'll also be helping to raise the profile of the petition on Change.org and the wider Internet since the most popular petitions are automatically promoted on Change.org's homepage and on a network of progressive blogs and websites ([Mother Jones](http://www.motherjones.com), for instance). If we manage to keep the momentum going through Congress' August recess, we'll even have a shot of having the petition promoted to a network of 1.5 million Change.org supporters in mid-September, just as freedom to travel is likely to hit the House floor.

The past few weeks have been momentous. House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN) moved the *Travel Restriction Reform and Export Enhancement Act* (H.R. 4645) through his committee with travel intact. **64 percent** of Cuban Americans told the University of Miami that they support the unilateral lifting of travel restrictions for all U.S. citizens. The most prominent **opposition figures** in Cuba, eager for contact with U.S. travelers, called on Congress to open travel without delay. In negotiations with the Catholic Church, Cuba's **agreed to release** scores of political prisoners. Editorial boards of newspapers large and small in Texas, Florida, North Carolina, and beyond are near unanimous: the time to end the travel ban is now. And just last week, Congresswoman Kathy Castor of the Tampa area **came out in support of freedom to travel**, the first representative from Florida to do so. And on, and on, and on.

Today, momentum is on our side; but to we need *you* to stay active and engaged through Congress' August recess and into the fall if we're to accomplish our ultimate goal. We're only weeks away from making not only "**Havana Dreaming,**" but Havana *living*, a possibility for all U.S. citizens.

Please **sign our petition** on Change.org and don't forget to encourage your friends to do the same. You'd also be helping us greatly if you could forward this message on to your networks.

We can't put into words how much we appreciate your continued activism and determination; your moxie inspires us to press ahead and convinces us that, together, we can--we *will*--win this thing!

We won't be in touch again until later this summer, so let us just say: enjoy the beach.

Best,

Mavis, Paulo, and Travis
The LAWG Cuba Team

Latin America Working Group

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