

111TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5006

To require the President to call a White House Conference on Haiti.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 13, 2010

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. WATSON, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. NORTON, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SABLON, and Mr. CAO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To require the President to call a White House Conference on Haiti.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “White House Con-
5 ference on Haiti Act of 2010”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Haiti is the poorest country in the Western
2 Hemisphere.

3 (2) On January 12, 2010, a 7.0 magnitude
4 earthquake struck the country of Haiti.

5 (3) The earthquake caused massive devastation
6 across Haiti, destroying government buildings, hos-
7 pitals, schools, and vital aid offices including the
8 headquarters of the United Nations mission to
9 Haiti.

10 (4) An estimated 3,000,000 people have been
11 directly affected by the disaster in Haiti, nearly one-
12 third of the country's population, who are currently
13 at risk of long-term displacement and vulnerability.

14 (5) Prior to the earthquake, Haiti was still in
15 the process of recovering from a recent series of hur-
16 ricanes and tropical storms, previous natural disas-
17 ters, and food shortages and rising commodity
18 prices, but was showing encouraging signs of im-
19 provement.

20 (6) President Obama vowed the “unwavering
21 support” of the United States and pledged a “swift,
22 coordinated and aggressive effort to save lives and
23 support the recovery in Haiti”.

1 (7) Prior to the earthquake, there were approxi-
2 mately 10,000 nongovernmental organizations oper-
3 ating in Haiti.

4 (8) At least 3,000,000 Haitians live abroad.

5 (9) Haitians abroad provide significant capital
6 to local economies in Haiti through travel and remit-
7 tances and have the potential to advance reconstruc-
8 tion efforts by providing needed skills and resources.

9 (10) The response to the tragedy from the glob-
10 al community has been overwhelmingly positive.

11 (11) Individuals, businesses, and philanthropic
12 organizations across the United States and through-
13 out the international community have responded in
14 support of Haiti during this time of crisis.

15 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE.**

16 (a) **AUTHORITY TO CALL CONFERENCE.**—Not later
17 than December 31, 2010, the President shall call the
18 White House Conference on Haiti (in this Act referred to
19 as the “Conference”) to be convened not later than 6
20 months after the selection of the Policy Committee estab-
21 lished in section 4, in order to make fundamental policy
22 recommendations on ways to assist in the recovery and
23 long-term development of Haiti.

24 (b) **PLANNING AND DIRECTION.**—The Secretary of
25 State and the Secretary of Homeland Security (in this Act

1 referred to as the “Co-chairs”) shall plan, conduct, and
2 convene the Conference, in consultation with other appro-
3 priate Cabinet members.

4 (c) PURPOSES OF CONFERENCE.—The purposes of
5 the Conference are to—

6 (1) bring attention to the ongoing challenges
7 facing Haiti and the progress made in its recovery
8 from the January 12, 2010, earthquake;

9 (2) promote collaboration and coordination be-
10 tween the United States Government, foreign gov-
11 ernments, the private sector, international non-
12 governmental organizations, and the Haitian dias-
13 pora;

14 (3) identify gaps or duplication in the provision
15 of humanitarian assistance;

16 (4) highlight innovative ideas for sustainable re-
17 building and redevelopment in Haiti;

18 (5) share best practices in development assist-
19 ance in Haiti and in nations facing similar chal-
20 lenges;

21 (6) develop opportunities for greater involve-
22 ment in Haiti’s recovery by the Haitian diaspora
23 and the private sector;

24 (7) review the structure, scope, and effective-
25 ness of existing policies and initiatives by public and

1 private entities regarding development assistance,
2 stability, and long-term economic growth in Haiti;
3 and

4 (8) identify possible changes to United States
5 immigration, trade, and foreign aid policies that may
6 assist in a more rapid, sustainable recovery.

7 **SEC. 4. POLICY COMMITTEE; RELATED COMMITTEES.**

8 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than June 30,
9 2010, there is established a Policy Committee comprising
10 of 17 members to be selected as follows:

11 (1) PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTEES.—Nine mem-
12 bers shall be selected by the President and shall in-
13 clude—

14 (A) 3 members who are officers or employ-
15 ees of the United States; and

16 (B) 6 members with experience in address-
17 ing the needs of disaster-stricken and devel-
18 oping countries.

19 (2) HOUSE APPOINTEES.—

20 (A) SELECTION BY SPEAKER.—Two mem-
21 bers shall be selected by the Speaker of the
22 House of Representatives after consultation
23 with the chairperson of the Committee on For-
24 eign Affairs, the chairperson of the Committee
25 on Homeland Security, the chairperson of the

1 Committee on the Judiciary, the chairperson of
2 the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and
3 the chairperson of the Committee on Financial
4 Services, of the House of Representatives.

5 (B) SELECTION BY MINORITY LEADER.—

6 Two members shall be selected by the minority
7 leader of the House of Representatives, after
8 consultation with the ranking minority members
9 of such committees.

10 (3) SENATE APPOINTEES.—

11 (A) SELECTION BY MAJORITY LEADER.—

12 Two members shall be selected by the majority
13 leader of the Senate, after consultation with
14 members of the Committee on Foreign Rela-
15 tions, the Committee on Homeland Security
16 and Governmental Affairs, the Committee on
17 Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and
18 the Committee on Finance, of the Senate.

19 (B) SELECTION BY MINORITY LEADER.—

20 Two members shall be selected by the minority
21 leader of the Senate, after consultation with
22 members of such committees.

23 (b) VOTING; CHAIRPERSON.—

24 (1) VOTING.—The Policy Committee shall act
25 by the vote of a majority of the members present.

1 A quorum of Committee members shall not be re-
2 quired to conduct Committee business.

3 (2) CHAIRPERSON.—The Under Secretary of
4 State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs shall
5 serve as the chairperson of the Policy Committee.
6 The chairperson may vote only to break a tie vote
7 of the other members of the Policy Committee.

8 (c) DUTIES OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE.—The Pol-
9 icy Committee shall initially meet at the call of the Co-
10 chairs, not later than 30 days after the last member is
11 selected under subsection (a). Subsequent meetings of the
12 Policy Committee shall be held at the call of the chair-
13 person. Through meetings, hearings, and working ses-
14 sions, the Policy Committee shall—

15 (1) make recommendations to the Co-chairs to
16 facilitate the timely convening of the Conference;

17 (2) submit to the Co-chairs a proposed agenda
18 for the Conference not later than 90 days after the
19 first meeting of the Policy Committee;

20 (3) make recommendations for the delegates of
21 the Conference;

22 (4) establish the number of delegates to be se-
23 lected under section 5; and

1 (5) establish an executive committee consisting
2 of 3 members of the Policy Committee to work with
3 delegates of the Conference.

4 **SEC. 5. CONFERENCE DELEGATES.**

5 To carry out the purposes of the Conference, the Co-
6 chairs shall bring together delegates representative of the
7 spectrum of thought in the fields of development and hu-
8 manitarian assistance, infrastructure development, trade,
9 democratic strengthening, and Haitian culture and his-
10 tory, without regard to political affiliation or past partisan
11 activity, who shall include—

12 (1) representatives of the United States and
13 international governments;

14 (2) members of the Haitian diaspora;

15 (3) representatives of international nongovern-
16 mental organizations; and

17 (4) individuals from private sector entities.

18 **SEC. 6. CONFERENCE ADMINISTRATION.**

19 (a) ADMINISTRATION.—In administering this section,
20 the Co-chairs shall—

21 (1) provide written notice to all members of the
22 Policy Committee of each meeting, hearing, or work-
23 ing session of such Committee not later than 48
24 hours before the occurrence of such meeting, hear-
25 ing, or working session;

1 (2) request the cooperation and assistance of
2 the heads of such other Federal departments and
3 agencies as may be appropriate, including the detail-
4 ing of personnel;

5 (3) make available for public comment a pro-
6 posed agenda prepared by the Policy Committee,
7 which will reflect to the greatest extent possible the
8 major issues facing assistance to Haiti with the pur-
9 poses of the Conference set forth in section 3(c);

10 (4) prepare and make available background ma-
11 terials that the Co-chairs deem necessary for the use
12 of delegates to the Conference; and

13 (5) employ such additional personnel as may be
14 necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act
15 without regard to provisions of title 5, United States
16 Code, governing appointments in the competitive
17 service, and without regard to chapter 51 and sub-
18 chapter III of chapter 53 of such title relating to
19 classification and General Schedule pay rates.

20 (b) DUTIES.—In carrying out the Co-chairs’s respon-
21 sibilities and functions under this section, the Co-chairs
22 shall ensure that—

23 (1) the proposed agenda prepared under sub-
24 section (a)(3) is published in the Federal Register

1 not later than 30 days after such agenda is approved
2 by the Policy Committee;

3 (2) the personnel employed under subsection
4 (a)(5) are fairly balanced in terms of points of views
5 represented and are appointed without regard to po-
6 litical affiliation or previous partisan activities;

7 (3) the recommendations of the Conference are
8 not inappropriately influenced by any public official
9 or by any special interest, but instead are the result
10 of the independent and collective judgment of the
11 delegates of the Conference; and

12 (4) before the Conference is convened—

13 (A) current and adequate statistical data
14 and other information on health and social out-
15 comes in Haiti, and

16 (B) such information as may be necessary
17 to evaluate programs and policies relating to
18 Haiti,

19 which the Co-chairs may obtain by making grants to
20 or entering into an agreement with, public agencies
21 or nonprofit organizations, are readily available in
22 advance of the Conference to the delegates.

23 (c) GIFTS.—The Co-chairs may accept, on behalf of
24 the United States, gifts (in cash or in kind, including vol-
25 untary and uncompensated services), which shall be avail-

1 able to carry out this Act. Gifts of cash shall be available
2 in addition to amounts appropriated to carry out this title.
3 Gifts may be earmarked by the donor or the executive
4 committee for a specific purpose.

5 (d) RECORDS.—The Co-chairs shall maintain records
6 regarding—

7 (1) the sources, amounts, and uses of gifts ac-
8 cepted under subsection (c); and

9 (2) the identity of each person receiving assist-
10 ance to carry out this Act, and the amount of such
11 assistance received by each such person.

12 **SEC. 7. REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE.**

13 (a) PRELIMINARY REPORT.—Not later than 100 days
14 after the Conference adjourns, the Policy Committee shall
15 prepare a preliminary report on the Conference which
16 shall be published in the Federal Register and submitted
17 to Members of Congress and relevant administration offi-
18 cials. The Policy Committee shall request that Members
19 of Congress and administration officials submit to the Pol-
20 icy Committee, not later than 45 days after receiving such
21 report, their views and findings on such report.

22 (b) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after
23 the date on which the Conference adjourns, the Policy
24 Committee shall—

1 (1) prepare a final report of the Conference
2 which shall include a compilation of the views and
3 findings of the Members of Congress and adminis-
4 tration officials received under subsection (a); and

5 (2) publish in the Federal Register, and trans-
6 mit to the President and to Congress, the rec-
7 ommendations for the administrative action and the
8 legislation necessary to implement the recommenda-
9 tions contained in such report.

10 **SEC. 8. STATUS REPORTS.**

11 (a) INITIAL STATUS REPORT.—Not later than 1 year
12 after the date on which the Conference adjourns, the
13 Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public
14 Affairs shall—

15 (1) prepare a status report documenting the im-
16 plementation of the recommendations contained in
17 the final report described in section 7(b)(1); and

18 (2) publish in the Federal Register, and trans-
19 mit to the President and to Congress, such status
20 report.

21 (b) SUBSEQUENT STATUS REPORTS.—Not later than
22 5 years after the date on which the Conference adjourns,
23 and every 5 years thereafter until all recommendations in
24 the final report described in section 7(b)(1) are achieved,
25 the Comptroller General shall—

1 (1) prepare a status report documenting the im-
2 plementation of the recommendations contained in
3 such final report; and

4 (2) publish in the Federal Register, and trans-
5 mit to the President and to Congress, such status
6 report.

7 **SEC. 9. COMMITTEE HEARINGS.**

8 (a) HEARINGS ON REPORTS.—The Committee on
9 Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the
10 Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate shall each
11 hold hearings on the recommendations and status reports
12 received by Congress under sections 7(b)(2), 8(a)(2), and
13 8(b)(2).

14 (b) HEARINGS.—The Committee on Foreign Affairs
15 of the House of Representatives and the Committee on
16 Foreign Relations of the Senate shall each hold annual
17 hearings on recovery and long-term development of Haiti.

18 (c) EXERCISE OF RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.—Sub-
19 sections (a) and (b) are enacted—

20 (1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of
21 the House of Representatives and Senate, and, as
22 such, they shall be considered as part of the rules
23 of the House or Senate (as the case may be), and
24 such rules shall supersede any other rule of the

1 House or Senate only to the extent that rule is in-
2 consistent therewith; and

3 (2) with full recognition of the constitutional
4 right of either House to change such rules (so far
5 as relating to the procedure in such House) at any
6 time, in the same manner, and to the same extent
7 as in the case of any other rule of the House or Sen-
8 ate.

9 **SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

10 (a) AUTHORIZATION.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be
12 appropriated to carry out this Act—

13 (A) such sums as may be necessary for the
14 first fiscal year in which the Policy Committee
15 plans the Conference and for the following fis-
16 cal year; and

17 (B) such sums as may be necessary for the
18 fiscal year in which the Conference is held.

19 (2) LIMITATION.—Any new spending authority
20 or new authority to enter into contracts under this
21 Act, and under which the United States is obligated
22 to make outlays, shall be effective only to the extent,
23 and in such amounts, as are provided in advance in
24 appropriations Acts.

25 (b) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
2 graph (3), funds appropriated to carry out this Act
3 and funds received as gifts under section 6(c) shall
4 remain available for obligation or expenditure until
5 the expiration of the 1-year period beginning on the
6 date the Conference adjourns.

7 (2) UNOBLIGATED FUNDS.—Except as provided
8 in paragraph (3), any such funds neither obligated
9 nor expended before the expiration of the 1-year pe-
10 riod beginning on the date the Conference adjourns
11 shall be returned to the United States Treasury.

12 (3) CONFERENCE NOT CONVENED.—If the Con-
13 ference is not convened before December 31, 2010,
14 a trust fund shall be established and such funds
15 shall be deposited in the trust fund and shall only
16 be available for a future Conference on Haiti.

○