



## *Department of Social Development and World Peace*

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • FAX 202-541-3339  
WEBSITE: WWW.USCCB.ORG/SDWP

October 28, 2005

Senator Mike DeWine  
House of Representatives  
140 Russell Senate Office Building  
FAX: 202-224 6519

Dear Senator DeWine:

Knowing of your consistent support for the human and economic development of the people of Haiti, I write once again to commend your lead in sponsoring a bill, similar to the earlier Haiti Economic Recovery Opportunity Act of 2005, "to expand certain preferential trade treatment for Haiti." Like the previous HERO Act which you co-sponsored, the present bill represents a small but critically important step by which our country can help stimulate the economic recovery of the poorest nation in the hemisphere.

In a visit to Haiti last summer, a delegation of U. S. Catholic bishops heard pleas for just such legislation from Haitian bishops, political leaders and non-governmental organizations. Not only could this bill, once enacted, create many new jobs in that depressed economy but, equally importantly, it could stand as a beacon of hope to the people of Haiti, signaling the intention of the United States to follow through with essential economic assistance.

Especially over the past two years, the people of Haiti have had to endure extraordinary civil unrest and violence as well as devastating hurricanes and floods. With the prospect of a legitimate and popularly elected government coming into office next February, it is my prayer that this new legislation will bring encouragement and hope to the long-suffering Haitian people.

With thanks for your leadership in this matter and with best personal wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend John H. Ricard, S.S.J.  
Bishop of Pensacola-Tallahassee  
Chairman, Committee on International  
Policy