

December 6, 2013

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President:

As Cuban Americans, we want to be able to travel to Cuba to visit our families; and we appreciate what you have done to make this possible since you came into office in 2009. As a result of your actions to end restrictions on family travel, Cuban Americans are now making more than 400,000 trips a year to the island. These visits strengthen family ties and bring moral and material support to our relatives in Cuba.

Today, though, we fear that this unrestricted travel may be in jeopardy. We are deeply concerned that Cuban consular services have been suspended in the United States because of the difficulties that the Cuban Interests Section is having in finding a bank to handle its account. We fear that we will not be able to get the visas and documentation we need for family travel in the coming months.

Mr. President, the White House, the Treasury Department, and the State Department need to work quickly to fix this problem, for the sake of our families. We are pleased to see that the State Department said last week that it "would like to see the Cuban missions return to full operations."

However, newspapers are running stories with headlines like "U.S. sanctions make Cuba's bank account too toxic for banks," as Reuters did over the past weekend. The problem has not yet been resolved.

Mr. President, you have the power to get this situation resolved. The Treasury Department, which enforces financial sanctions, and the State Department must do what is needed to ensure that the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, DC, and its Consulates, which handle visas and travel matters, has access to a bank to conduct its legally-authorized financial transactions. The Departments of State and Treasury can take steps so that U.S. banks are not worried they will be fined or punished for handling banking matters for the Cuban Interests Section in the United States. They can clarify the rules for the banking community, meet with them and make necessary adjustments, shift the tone of sanctions enforcement, or take other steps. They need to act now.

Your action, Mr. President, can ensure that we can travel to visit family, and that your commitment to supporting family travel remains intact. Please act now.

Sincerely yours,

1. **Airline Brokers**, Vivian Mannerud, President (Florida)
2. **Caribbean American Children Foundation**, Alberto Jones, President (Florida)
3. **Cuban American Alliance**, Delvis Fernandez, Executive Director (National; offices in California & Washington, DC)
4. **Cuban Americans for Engagement (CAFÉ)**, Arturo Lopez Levy (Colorado), Maria Isabel Alfonso (New York), Board Members (National)
5. **Cuban American Defense League**, Xiomara Almaguer-Levy, President (Florida)
6. **Cubapuentes, Inc.**, Silvia Wilhelm, President (Florida)
7. **ENCASA/US-CUBA** (Emergency Network of Cuban American Scholars and Artists for Change in U.S.-Cuba Policy), Rubén G. Rumbaut, Board of Directors (National; office in California)
8. **Foundation for the Normalization of Relations with Cuba (FORNORM)**, Elena Freyre, President (Florida)
9. **Generacion Cambio Cubano**, Hugo Cancio, Administrator (Florida)
10. **Hope for Cuba Foundation**, Jorge Ignacio Fernandez, Founder & President (Pennsylvania)
11. **J Perez Associates, Inc.**, Joe Perez, COB & CEO (California)
12. **Jewish Solidarity**, Eddie B Levy, Chairman (Florida)
13. **Progreso Weekly**, Alvaro Fernandez, Editor (National; office in Florida)
14. **Asociacion Jose Marti**, Damian Diaz, President (Florida)
15. **Alianza Martiana**, Max Lesnik, President (Florida)
16. **Asociacion de Mujeres Cristianas en Defensa de La Familia Cubana**, Rosa Reyes (Florida)
17. **Asociacion de Trabajadores de la Comunidad Cubana (ATC)**, Jacinto Valdes, President (Florida)
18. **Brigada Antonio Maceo**, Andres Gomez, National Coordinator (Florida)