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May 22, 2026

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear President Trump and Secretary Rubio:

On behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus, I am reaching out to express my alarm with the growing humanitarian crisis in Cuba. Since January, the Trump Administration has imposed a cruel oil blockade on Cuba, which has barred all fuel from entering the country. With people dying as a result of this cruel policy, it is time for the administration to lift its oil blockade and the archaic, unnecessarily harsh sanctions that have disproportionately harmed innocent Cubans for decades.

Under the administration's oil blockade and tightening of sanctions, Cubans are dying. The New York Times has reported that, as a result of the sanctions, the infant mortality rate in Cuba has more than doubled since 2018. With food shortages leading to more underweight pregnant mothers and their newborns, too many Cuban children are unable to make it out of the hospital and home to their families.

The punitive sanctions your administration continues to impose has left hospitals short on antibiotics, medicine and equipment, with vaccinations tossed out without proper electricity to cool and store them, and doctors forced to manually pump air into children's lungs while they are on ventilators during blackouts. While disingenuously claiming to be helping the Cuban people, this administration has single-handedly exacerbated a critical humanitarian crisis in Cuba that is claiming the lives of innocent men, women, and children every day.

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We are particularly concerned by the acute, multi-faceted humanitarian crisis unfolding in the provinces of Guantánamo, Santiago de Cuba, Granma, Holguín, and Las Tunas, provinces known for their deep Afro-Cuban roots and cultural traditions. The compounding energy crisis brought about by your administration's cruel oil blockade, in addition to recovery efforts still underway from Hurricane Melissa, has made life for these communities even harder.

Enough is enough. The Congressional Black Caucus will not stand by and allow this administration to drag out this barbaric policy that generates unimaginable human suffering in Cuba. We are demanding that you end the oil blockade, lift the sanctions on Cuba, and allow the Cuban people access to the most basic resources they need to sustain life on the island. It is time to remove the weight of these unjust actions from the backs of the Cuban people. We look forward to your attention and response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yvette D. Clarke" with "M.C." written in smaller letters below the name.

U.S. Representative Yvette D. Clarke (NY-09)
Chair, Congressional Black Caucus