

END RESTRICTIONS ON CUBAN-AMERICAN FAMILY TRAVEL AND CHARITY

Restrictions on Cuban-American travel and remittances to Cuba were greatly restricted by the Bush Administration in 2004. Here's how:

- Cuban-Americans can now only visit family in Cuba once every three years. (And the rules are retroactive, so that people who visited relatives a year before the new rules went into effect and were planning to go back, cannot return for two more years.)
- They can only visit immediate family members. Aunts, uncles, cousins and other extended relatives no longer count as family.
- There are no exceptions to these restrictions, even in the cases of an illness or death in the family.
- The government is limiting family charity. Cuban-Americans can only send \$300 in remittances per quarter to people in Cuba, and remittances can only be sent to immediate family members, even if other relatives or friends are in need.
- Travelers to Cuba can only take 44 pounds worth of luggage per person to Cuba. This greatly limits the much-needed humanitarian items and other gifts that Cuban-Americans can take to their families during their visit once every three years.
- Family charity is further limited by restrictions on items that can be sent in gift parcels. Gift parcels cannot include personal hygiene items, clothing, or other much-needed products. Gift parcels can only be sent to immediate family members.

WHY RESTRICTIONS ON CUBAN-AMERICAN TRAVEL AND CHARITY MUST END:

- **It is cruel to separate families, especially during family emergencies or tragedies.**
- **This is a humanitarian matter- it is wrong to limit family charity.** Remittances, gift parcels, and gifts during family visits improve the standard of living of millions of Cubans.
- **These measures break down family bonds;** the government should not impede or interfere in normal family interaction and relationships.
- **These measures force Cuban-Americans to break the law** to maintain normal relationships with family members or give them needed charity.
- **These measures place domestic political concerns over family and citizen rights.** These restrictions, as with all components of the embargo, are based on domestic politics and are designed to please hardliners in the Cuban-American community. The hardliners are not affected by these cruel measures as most of them no longer have family on the island or have cut off contact with their relatives there.
- **These restrictions hurt Cuban-Americans and Cuban families, not Fidel Castro.** These restrictions are contrary to American values and, send a signal that the United States wants to promote political change in Cuba by increasing economic and emotional hardship for Cuban families.

THE CRUEL NATURE OF CUBAN-AMERICAN FAMILY TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

- U.S Army Sgt. Carlos Lazo, who was stationed in Fallujah, was unable to visit his sons in Cuba during his two week leave from duty in 2004 because he had already visited them during the last three years. Sgt. Lazo has spoken out to Members of Congress and the press about this grave and illogical injustice.
- Leandro Seoane was unable to visit his dying father or help his mother during his father's illness. After the death of his father, he was unable to attend the funeral or visit his grieving mother. He spent hundreds of dollars in costly telephone calls to speak with her during this family tragedy.
- These are just two of thousands of individual stories that put a human face on the cruel and ridiculous nature of restrictions on Cuban-American family travel and charity.