

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 2, 2008

The Honorable George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing concerning your Emergency Supplemental request for Fiscal Year 2008, and specifically the dire needs of millions of Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). While we welcome the \$275 million you requested for assistance for refugees and IDPs, this amount falls far short of what is required to meet the needs of an increasingly desperate population.

As you are aware, there may be as many as 2 million Iraqi refugees in Jordan, Syria, Egypt and Lebanon, and an additional 2 million internally displaced persons in Iraq. The overwhelming majority of these people are living underground in extremely precarious circumstances. Those who fled the country with resources are rapidly depleting their savings. This translates into millions of adults without jobs, millions of children who cannot regularly attend school, and great strains on countries in the region that are trying to cope with the added economic burden.

The requirements of non-governmental organizations assisting vulnerable Iraqis, especially the displaced Iraqis, and appeals from international relief organizations serving the displaced are estimated at \$900 million this year. We believe the United States should be prepared to cover half the costs of international appeals. It is our moral obligation to do so. In addition, we believe bilateral assistance to our allies hosting Iraqi refugees is also critical to relieve the burden. The Congress has been supportive of Iraqi refugees, consistently appropriating more funds than your Administration requested. Unfortunately, the number of people in need has continued to grow, resulting in an humanitarian emergency on a scale rarely seen.

We cannot respond adequately to the needs of these and other humanitarian crises around the globe unless the Administration submits a budget amendment for these additional funds.

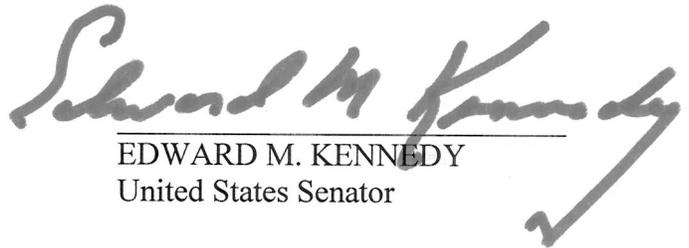
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

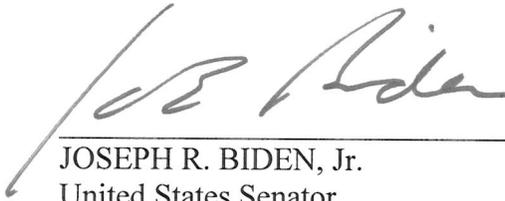
Respectfully,



PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator



EDWARD M. KENNEDY
United States Senator



JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.
United States Senator



JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN
United States Senator



CHUCK HAGEL
United States Senator



BENJAMIN L. CARDIN
United States Senator



ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator