

# *Let Cuba Live*

102 Twitchell Rd, So. Paris, Maine 04281, (207) 743-2183 [www.letcubalive.org](http://www.letcubalive.org)

October 13, 2017

Senator Susan M. Collins  
413 Dirksen Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Angus King  
133 Hart Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Collins and King,

We, the undersigned, are writing to you in opposition to the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba. The recent assault on Cuba from Hurricane Irma highlights the cruelty of this policy. Indeed, just as that hurricane was hitting eastern Cuba on September 8, President Trump was signing a memorandum relating to the “Continuation of the Exercise of Certain Authorities Under the Trading With the Enemy Act.” He was reauthorizing the U.S. economic embargo for one more year.

The U.S. government is continuing a policy that, over decades, has caused Cuba grave financial losses and shortages, even of healthcare supplies and food. The Cuban people have suffered, and this has been intentional. That purpose was made clear in State Department official Lester Mallory’s memo of April 1960: “The only foreseeable means of alienating internal support [for Cuba’s revolution] is through disenchantment and disaffection based on economic dissatisfaction and hardship.” He called for “a line of action which ... makes the greatest inroads in denying money and supplies to Cuba, to decrease monetary and real wages, to bring about hunger, desperation and overthrow of government.”

It looks like even in the best of times the U.S. government wants to hurt the Cuban people, but now a devastating hurricane worsens their suffering. Nation and peoples aspiring to live in harmony with others normally reach out to help the victims of natural disasters. In the wake of Hurricane Irma, for example, beleaguered Cuba sent 750 doctors to other islands in distress. But an unflinching United States steadfastly harasses Cuba, rubbing salt in the wounds.

Additionally, we would point out that continued U.S. abuse of Cuba is a sad commentary on U.S. democracy. To explain: Opinion polls show that most Americans, including Cuban-Americans in Florida, want the embargo to end. The Obama administration was on the same page. Yet decision-making on Cuba seems to have been farmed out to special interests. Apparently a few Cuban-American legislators are in charge.

The Senate does have a unique role in shaping U.S. foreign policy. Presumably, that means the whole Senate and presumably Cuba falls within the scope of U.S. foreign policy. At the same time the United States plays the bully in Cuba at the cost of grievous suffering there.

Gratifyingly, each of you has already supported or offered measures aimed at correcting U.S. policies on Cuba. But we think the time is over for incremental steps. We see the need for courageous, decisive action in order to break the ice jam on Cuba. You would be going against the grain. **We invite you, our Maine Senators, to speak out and to act against the entire Cuban Embargo, and to do so in a fashion dramatic enough that fellow senators pay attention, and indeed our whole people.**

We thank you for your efforts in the past toward a rational Cuba policy and for your consideration of what we have proposed here.

Sincerely yours,

Judy Robbins (for Let Cuba Live), Sedgwick, Maine  
Tom Whitney (for Let Cuba Live), South Paris, Maine

Alison Whitney , South Paris  
Amy Krawczyk , Buxton  
Andrew Packard , Bar Mills  
Anne Stanley , Eastport  
Anne Kinney , Auburn  
Barbara West , Bath  
Bill Slavic , Portland  
Bonnie Preston , Blue Hill  
Bruce Gagnon , Bath  
Carolyn Waite , Sedgwick  
Carolyn Coe , Orland  
Cathy Mink , Waldo  
Cecile Eisenhardt , Augusta  
Charles Hedrick , Nobleboro  
Chris McKinnon , Augusta  
Claire Mortimer , Brooklin  
Craig Cote , Casco  
Crystal Cron , Portland  
David Stanley , Eastport  
Donna Cottle , Bailey Island  
Dori Upham , Litchfield  
Doug Lane , Lewiston  
Douglas Cowan , Brooksville  
Douglas Allen , Orono  
Dud Hendrick , Deer Isle  
Eileen Coyne , Leeds  
Emily Albee , Bradley  
Gary Vencil , Prospect  
Heather Cron , Portland  
Helen T. Price-Wharff , Lewiston  
Howard Evans , Blue Hill  
Ilze Petersons , Orono  
Jacqui Deveneau , Portland  
Janet Caldwell , Hallowell  
Jean Whitney , Bar Mills  
Jean Olivett , Blue Hill  
Jenny Orr , West Paris  
Joan Beal , Norway  
John Greenman , Orland  
John Upham , Littlefield  
Jon Olsen , Jefferson  
Karen Saum , Belfast

Karen Lane , Lewiston  
Kate Harris , Belfast  
Kevin Simpson , Auburn  
Larry Dansinger , Bangor  
Lawrence Reichard , Belfast  
Margaret Craven , Lewiston  
Maria Sanchez Cron , Portland  
Marie Estelle Gill , Sabbattus  
Mary Hobson , Topsham  
Maryanne Talley , Augusta  
Marybeth Sullivan , Bath  
Maurine Tobin , Deer Isle  
Meryl Nass , Ellsworth  
Nancy Galland , Stockton Springs  
Nancy Pinkham , Leeds  
Nancy Boothby , Sedgwick  
Olenka Folda , Brooklin  
Pat Fogg , Greene  
Patricia Wheeler , Deer Isle  
Patrick Eisenhardt , Augusta  
Paul Eagle , Belfast  
Peggy Akers , Portland  
Peter Robbins , Sedgwick  
Peter Hellman , No. Berwick  
Peter Green , Portland  
Philip Cottle , Bailey Island  
Pilar Tirado , Brunswick  
Renee Cote , Auburn for Let Cuba Live  
Rex Beisel , Casco  
Richard Beal , Norway  
Roger Leisner , Augusta  
Russell Wray , Hancock  
Scott Vlaun , Otisfield  
Sheila Malone , Farmingdale  
Sophie Cowan , Brooksville  
Stacy Jacobsohn , Augusta  
Steve Benson , Blue Hill  
Steve Burke , Warren  
Suzanne Hedrick , Nobleboro  
Ursula Slavick , Portland  
Virginia Starbird , Leeds  
Wells Staley Mays , Portland

Dear Senators Collins and King,

Our Maine-based organization *Let Cuba Live* has recently devised the accompanying letter and circulated it among Maine citizens. We have been working politically for 25 years on behalf of U.S./Cuban relations founded on mutual respect. Our efforts have centered on providing information about Cuba, with the impacts of the anti-Cuban U.S. economic embargo having taken up much of our attention.

We will be looking forward to learning of your reactions to adjusting U.S. policies to fit humanitarian norms.

Thank you for giving consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Judy Robbins and Tom Whitney for Let Cuba Live  
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