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**BAUCUS, GRASSLEY, NELSON, LEMIEUX INTRODUCE PLAN TO HELP HAITI**  
*Senators' Proposal Would Extend Tax Deductions for Charitable Contributions*

**Washington, DC** – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Ranking Member Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), along with Senators Bill Nelson (D-Fla.) and George Lemieux (R-Fla.), today introduced the Haiti Assistance Income Tax Incentive (HAITI) Act, legislation designed to help facilitate emergency aid and rebuilding efforts in Haiti following last week's devastating earthquake. The legislation, announced Friday with House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.) and Ranking Member Dave Camp (R-M.I.), would allow U.S. taxpayers to make charitable contributions to Haiti relief programs before March 1, 2010 and claim those contributions on their 2009 income tax return. Today's Senate introduction follows passage of identical legislation by the House of Representatives.

**"This bill is a clear signal Americans want to help Haiti battle back from crisis,"** Baucus said. **"This tax provision, which was successful following the tsunami tragedy in Indonesia, makes it easier for folks to give to designated relief efforts in Haiti and deduct those contributions on this year's tax return. This small but important step will help the people of Haiti in the rescue and rebuilding of their struggling nation."**

**"Americans give generously to disaster relief, and I hope this extension will encourage them to give even more,"** Grassley said. **"I also hope Americans will make sure the charities they choose are above board. After the 2005 tsunami, some con artists were quick to try to turn a profit on the tragedy. People should be careful to give only to groups they recognize and trust."**

**"This will go a long way toward keeping donations flowing to relief efforts in Haiti,"** said U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson.

**"The people in Haiti are hurting and we need to do as much as possible to help them,"** said Lemieux. **"This encourages people to contribute to the ongoing relief and recovery efforts. Any assistance U.S. citizens can provide will help provide resources as Haiti begins the road the recovery."**

The proposal is similar to legislation passed unanimously in 2005 following the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster. That legislation allowed 2005 charitable donations to be counted toward the previous year's tax return. Under current law, taxpayers would have to wait until next year's filing season to claim a tax deduction for Haiti-related contributions. Today's provision is limited to cash contributions made specifically for Haiti disaster relief.

Original co-sponsors of today's proposal include Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.), Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.), Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.), Jim Bunning (R-Ky.), John Kerry (D-Mass.), Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.), John Cornyn (R-Texas), Robert Menendez (D-N.J.), Chris Dodd (D-Conn.), Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), Mary Landrieu (D-La.), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), Mark Udall (D-Colo.), Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.), Tim Johnson (D-S.D.) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.).

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