

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2003

March 25, 2014

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to wish you well on your trip to Vatican City and in your meeting with Pope Francis. I encourage you to take this opportunity to raise the issue of Mr. Alan Gross's continued detention in a Cuban prison.

Mr. Gross has been imprisoned in Cuba for over four years and his release remains a matter of grave urgency. Mr. Gross's physical and emotional health continues to deteriorate and his detention has taken a devastating emotional toll on his wife, daughters, and mother. It is imperative that Mr. Gross be freed on humanitarian grounds and be allowed to reunite with his family.

I have previously reached out and asked that you take whatever steps necessary to obtain Mr. Gross's release. As you prepare to travel to the Vatican, I ask that you appeal to Pope Francis and request his intervention in Mr. Gross's case. In 2012, I made a similar request of the Vatican prior to Pope Benedict XVI's visit to Cuba. The Pope is in a unique position to speak to the Cuban government and request compassion for Mr. Gross. I believe your meeting is an ideal opportunity to raise this issue.

I appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to continuing our work together on securing the release of Mr. Gross.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator