



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH &amp; HUMAN SERVICES

Social Security Administration

Honorable William Lehman  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Lehman:

I am responding to your letter to the President, dated December 14, 1984, regarding a number of Cuban immigration issues. Your letter was forwarded to the Department of Health and Human Services by INS Commissioner Alan C. Nelson for additional information.

We do not believe that the plans of the INS to convert to permanent resident alien status eligible Cubans from the 1980 Mariel boatlift will create an added financial burden on the State of Florida because those Cubans who become permanent resident aliens will be eligible for essentially the same range of programs with the same conditions of eligibility and of Federal reimbursement that currently exist for them in their present status as Cuban/Haitian entrants.

As you are aware, the recent negotiations between the United States and Cuba re-established normal immigration procedures between the two countries. Under the agreement reached in December 1984, up to 3,000 former political prisoners and their families are expected to enter the United States with the legal status of refugees. These Cuban refugees will be considered within the 70,000 worldwide refugee admissions figure for FY 1985. Funds to cover their costs for cash and medical assistance will be provided through ORR's regular ongoing grants to the State of Florida for refugee assistance, and to any other State where political prisoners might resettle or join relatives. Under the Refugee Act, Federal funding is provided to reimburse States for the cost of cash and medical assistance provided to needy refugees during their first 36 months in the United States. This includes reimbursement during the first 36 months for the normal State share of costs under the program of aid to families with dependent children (AFDC) and under the Medicaid program, and the cost of any State supplementary payments (SSP's) under the program of supplemental security income (SSI); the cost during a refugee's first 18 months of aid provided under the special programs of refugee cash assistance (RCA) and refugee medical assistance (RMA); and the cost during the second 18 months of any assistance provided under a State or local general assistance (GA) program.

I hope that you will find this information helpful.

Sincerely,

*Phillip N Hawkes*

Phillip N. Hawkes  
Director  
Office of Refugee Resettlement