

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 19, 2010

His Excellency Urs Ziswiler
Ambassador of Switzerland to the United States
2900 Cathedral Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

Dear Ambassador Ziswiler:

We write to convey to the Swiss government our concern that effective 2012, non-European missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church) will no longer be permitted to enter Switzerland to perform their voluntary missionary service. We earnestly petition the Swiss government to reconsider this decision and to work with us and the LDS Church to find a solution which would permit LDS missionaries to continue to perform their missionary service in Switzerland as they have done since 1850.

Due to the special relationship of the LDS Church with Switzerland, the LDS Church placed its first European temple in Bern which has made Switzerland an important center for the LDS Church in Europe. Today, there are a substantial number of LDS Church members in the United States who proudly claim their Swiss ancestry. It would be a great tragedy for our two nations if the long standing missionary program of the LDS Church in Switzerland were terminated. Switzerland can have no more enthusiastic, lifetime ambassadors in the United States than these young people when they return home. On a reciprocal basis, young Swiss members of the LDS Church are able to serve their 24-month missions in the United States without restriction.

Unlike other foreigners permitted to be in Switzerland as "foreign workers", LDS missionaries are in Switzerland as unpaid volunteers performing ecclesiastical duties only. As such, they do not compete with other workers and do not receive social benefits from the Swiss government. As members of the LDS Church serving in the Congress of the United States, we respectfully request that senior leaders of the LDS Church be given the opportunity to discuss this matter at the highest level of the Swiss government with a view to finding a way to permit LDS missionaries to continue to engage in unpaid, voluntary missionary activity in Switzerland.

Sincerely,

Mike Croy

Bob F. Bennett

Orin G. Hatch

Harry Reid

Mike Simon

Steve Chaffetz

Wally Hergen

Dean Heller

Jeff Leach

Howard Burt Smith

Adrian Smith

Faleomavaea
Jim Matheson