



The American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association

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January 21, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

**Re: Congratulations**

Dear President Obama:

As national president of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), and on behalf of the 3 million Americans of Greek heritage, and countless Philhellenes, I am writing to congratulate you and Vice President Joseph Biden, Jr., on your historic election and inauguration. Your election to the presidency is an affirmation that the American Dream is alive and well. It is the same Dream that eight brave visionary Greek immigrants had 86 years ago when they founded AHEPA in Atlanta, Georgia to combat the evils of bigotry and discrimination in early 20<sup>th</sup> century American society; and to help Greek immigrants assimilate into American society. Since then, AHEPA has been woven into the American fabric via its community programs and charitable works.

The ancient Greeks who founded democracy would have taken pride in our nation's democratic system. As their descendants, we recognize the importance of civic responsibility. It is a crucial element of AHEPA's mission. Hence, I am proud that many Greek-Americans participated in our Voter Awareness Campaign that encouraged voter registration, education, and participation among the community at-large.

We look forward to working with you on a number of key issues of concern to the American Hellenic community, strengthening U.S.-Greece relations, working toward a just, viable, and peaceful solution to the division of Cyprus, and securing religious freedom and protection of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. One specific issue that is at the forefront is Greece's candidacy to become a visa waiver nation. We very much want to work with your administration to see this process through to fruition.

Again, congratulations and best wishes for a successful term in office.

Sincerely,

Ike Gulas  
National President

Enclosures

*The mission of the AHEPA family is to promote the ancient Greek ideals of education, philanthropy, civic responsibility and family and individual excellence through community service and volunteerism.*