



*Farm Production*

*Animal Husbandry*

*Clean Water*

*Church Support*

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[www.faithinactionint.org](http://www.faithinactionint.org)

February 7, 2019

Dear Friends of Faith in Action International,

As some of you may be aware, there have been some recent significant changes made with FIAI. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to share what has happened and the process we have been through. For those who do not know me, I pastor a church in Grand Haven, MI that has been a long-time supporter of FIAI. I am also a former board member and have gone to Haiti with Tom. Perhaps most important of all, I consider Tom my friend. I share this so that you may know that what is described below was done by those who love Tom and seek his best interest while also valuing the mission of FIAI.

Last month, the FIAI Board voted to release Tom from his position as Executive Director as of January 31, 2019. Sadly, the injuries Tom sustained last year in his tragic accident left him unable to continue to serve as the leader of the organization. As you know, Tom nearly lost his life in the accident and suffered traumatic injuries. We praise God for Tom's survival and for the recovery he has made – but it has not been 100%.

This past fall, Tom returned to Haiti. At the time, the Board was not comfortable with him going back so soon and urged him to wait. But Tom's love for Haiti and its people could not be stopped and he returned home. The Board's desire was to give Tom every chance to continue to lead FIAI. As the founder of FIAI, we believed he had earned that right. We agreed that his return to Haiti in the fall would be a trial period in which he could determine what things he could do and what things he could not. Tom and I planned to meet before the end of the year to revise his job description so that we could delegate responsibilities he could not do to other employees. Again, our motivation all along was to keep Tom in his beloved Haiti, working as part of FIAI.

Tom's return to Haiti this fall did not go well. He was forced to deal with the on-going effects of the accident on a daily basis. He experienced intense pain throughout his body and was severely limited in his ability to do any physical labor. Due to injuries from his accident, he also struggled with the more cognitive side of his duties as well. This presented increasing difficulties. On multiple occasions, Tom expressed his thoughts about shutting down FIAI because of all he was going through. By the time the end of the year came around, the discussion Tom and I had planned about his future role never materialized. It had become apparent that Tom was not going to be in a

position to lead an international non-profit mission organization in any capacity. Faced with this reality, the Board considered Tom's best interest as well as that of FIAI. The decision was made to release Tom. Though this was difficult to do, we simply could not continue to operate under these circumstances and ask for your support in good faith.

As for Tom, he will soon return to Haiti. He has given me permission to share that he is in the process of applying for disability insurance. The Board has given Tom a severance package that is intended to serve as a long bridge until he receives disability benefits. We are grateful that as an organization we are able to provide for Tom for nearly two years beyond the date of his accident. It would not be right for me to share the specifics of his severance, but please know the entire process was done in direct communication with his family every step of the way. Our desire was for the Board and his family to form a circle of care around Tom to reassure him that all was done in his best interest. The Board and family members shared similar concerns and worked very well together. I am grateful for the family's role in this entire process and their support for the Board's decisions.

In addition to what Tom has been offered through severance, we would like to invite you to offer a gift to Tom as thanks for his years of service and to help him through this season of transition. He is dear to so many, and I know that quite a number of you will want to take advantage of this opportunity to show your continued support. You may send your gift to the to the following address:

Tom Braak  
c/o Larry Braak  
8386 Warbler Drive  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

Please note that gifts for Tom can no longer be received through FIAI nor are they tax-deductible.

As for FIAI, its future is yet to be determined. Now that the Board has been able to work through the issues surrounding Tom's position, we will now turn our attention to consider the options in front of us. For now, all in-country operations are suspended. All Haitian employees will be let go as of February 28, 2019. This was our only option going forward. Projects have slowed down since Tom's accident. We do not have work for them to do, nor a designated leader. Each employee will receive severance based on years of service, according to Haitian guidelines. Moving forward, we are considering either transferring our remaining assets to a like-minded mission in the area or looking for a new executive director. We would appreciate prayers for wisdom and discernment.

Before concluding, I would like to personally thank all of you for your support of Tom and FIAI over the years. It has not been in vain. The work accomplished by FIAI cannot be undone. Through your generosity, thousands upon thousands of fruit trees have been distributed. Hundreds of water filters have been given out to those without access to clean water. Hundreds of pastors have been trained to lead their churches. Several communities have been supported and transformed through animal husbandry and family gardens. Also remember the Haitian employees who have been able to make a living and support their families these past many years by working for FIAI. And

finally, through your help Tom has been able to answer God's calling to serve the poor in Haiti for more than two decades. The people of Verrettes and the surrounding communities have been blessed by God through FIAI.

As stated earlier, we do not know if there are any more chapters to be written for FIAI, but we certainly can be grateful for all the wonderful ones that have been so far. We will keep you up to date as we discover the Lord's will in these matters.

In Christ,  
Rev. Dr. John Kenny  
on behalf of FIAI Board