



GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO

Federal Affairs Administration

December 15, 2017

Hon. Mitchell McConnell, Jr.
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Paul Ryan, Jr.
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Majority Leader, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Democratic Leader, and Ms. Democratic Leader:

Congress is now entering its last week of legislative activity this year. I implore you to use this critical window of opportunity to approve an emergency funding supplemental package that dedicates the necessary resources for Puerto Rico's recovery and reconstruction.

As you know the 3.4 million American citizens of Puerto Rico have been battered this year by two of the most powerful hurricanes in history, which unleashed level of destruction the scale and scope of which knows no historic precedent in the United States. While we have demonstrated an outstanding level of resilience, patience and will, we need help from Congress to fully recover. The ultimate fate of our island and community rests largely in your hands.

We are grateful for the support and funding that Congress provided in the previous emergency supplemental, but none of that funding was provided to support Puerto Rico's recovery efforts. We now need to begin the process of long-term recovery and reconstruction in earnest, and only you can allocate the level and types of resources to make that possible. To assist in this process, my administration presented the Build, Back Better report on November 13, 2017 to document our needs, using the best available information at that point in time. The report detailed both the unprecedented scale of destruction that we experienced as well as the federal resources needed to rebuild the island in a way that not only allows us to build back the way we were before, but to recover in a manner that makes Puerto Rico more resilient in the future so that we can avoid a crisis of this scale from ever happening again.



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Time is of the essence. The most critical emergency funding needs that we are requesting from Congress in the supplemental funding package are as follows:

- \$46 billion in funding for Community Development Block Grant Disaster Relief
 - \$31 billion to address disaster housing needs, \$15 billion of which is needed immediately so that Puerto Rico can initiate programs to address the needs of the island's housing stock
 - \$8 billion to supplement infrastructure investments from FEMA to allow Puerto Rico to build back in a manner that meets future needs and which provides increased resiliency (a minimum of \$2.3 billion of which is needed immediately)
 - \$750 million needed immediately to support economic recovery and tourism programs
 - \$6.25 billion for cost-share related to FEMA funds (at least \$500 million of which is required in the short-term simply to address non-federal cost share already incurred under FEMA's Individual Assistance programs)
- \$11.35 billion in funding for Medicaid to cover 100% federal match for 24 months and following that 3 years at the current funding level of \$1.6 billion per year
- \$2.2 billion in funding for Department of Transportation programs
- \$2 billion in funding for Department of Agriculture programs
- \$1.8 billion in funding for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers programs
- Statutory language in the Stafford Act to maximize resiliency and mitigation efforts for the rebuilding of Puerto Rico

As Governor, I recognize that the funding being requested is significant, and that it demands accountability. Puerto Rico is prepared to provide that to the American people. In building a resilient Puerto Rico for the future, I am determined to ensure that this recovery and rebuilding process will be the most transparent use of federal funds in U.S. disaster response history. Toward this end, I collaborated with FEMA and other Federal agencies to establish the Central Recovery and Reconstruction Office (CRRO). This organization is providing oversight and is implementing strict financial controls in cooperation with FEMA and other federal partners to ensure that there will be full accountability and to make the most out of every dollar that is allocated to our recovery. A detailed presentation on the CRRO's role and structure is also attached for your reference.

Congress must not delay action on Puerto Rico's supplemental request. The 3.4 million American citizens residing here need to have hope for a better future, and that cannot happen without a significant commitment of resources in support of our recovery. No Governor should ever be put in the position of having to deny that hope in the aftermath of a catastrophic disaster due to the inaction of Congress. America must rise again to the challenge, and make good on the promises of support and solidarity offered by the scores of Members of Congress that have visited the island since the hurricanes passed.



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Unless Congress acts in a vigorous and compelling way before the end of this year, you will have missed a critical opportunity to show Puerto Rico, America and the whole world that we are a Nation that takes care of its own and lives up to its commitments to its citizens. Leadership in Congress from both parties will be essential to our recovery, and the future economic and fiscal health of the island depends on your actions.

Working together with sustained federal assistance and your leadership and support, I am confident that in time the people of Puerto Rico will recover and grow stronger than ever.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ricardo A. Rosselló Nevares".

Ricardo A. Rosselló Nevares
Governor