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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

FOREIGN AFFAIRS
WESTERN HEMISPHERE
TERRORISM, NONPROLIFERATION, AND TRADE
NATURAL RESOURCES
RANKING MEMBER
INDIAN, INSULAR AND ALASKA NATIVE AFFAIRS
FEDERAL LANDS

September 28, 2017

The Honorable Rob Bishop
Chairman
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop:

We are writing to request that the Natural Resources Committee hold an oversight hearing on the response to hurricanes Irma and Maria in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

As you know, Hurricane Irma made landfall on St. Thomas and St. John in the Virgin Islands as a Category 5 storm on September 6th, causing destructive damage that will require months for the islands to recover. Two weeks later, Hurricane Maria came ashore on the island of St. Croix in the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico as a Category 4 hurricane with winds in excess of 150 miles per hour resulting in catastrophic damage on both islands. Today, more than a week since Maria impacted Puerto Rico, there is still no power on the island, very few places have water to drink or flush toilets and there is very limited food, fuel or cellular phone service. Remote villages and towns in Puerto Rico remain isolated, causing the Governor to label the situation as a humanitarian crisis affecting 3.4 million U.S. citizens.

Because the Natural Resources committee has broad jurisdiction over all matters regarding the insular areas of the United States, our members are often looked to for answers regarding the federal government's efforts to assist the people of the Virgin Island and Puerto Rico in securing the help they need in this time of crisis. Accordingly, it is appropriate that we exercise our authority in this regard, to hear from officials of the Trump administration, in a hearing, on the sufficiency of their efforts to respond to the crises in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Recent reports have heralded the administration's decision to send additional resources to Puerto Rico to address the growing crisis. We believe it would be instructive for the Natural Resources Committee to get specific details of the federal response to this unprecedented disaster impacting two of the most vulnerable members of our American family.

We stand ready to work with you to schedule this hearing and look forward to receiving your response.

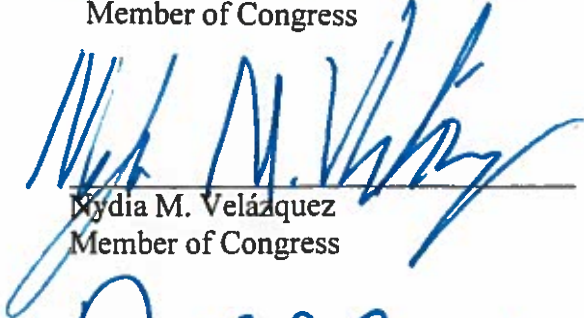
Sincerely,



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



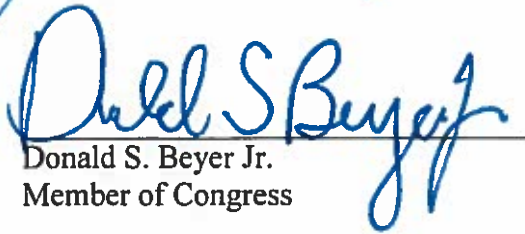
Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



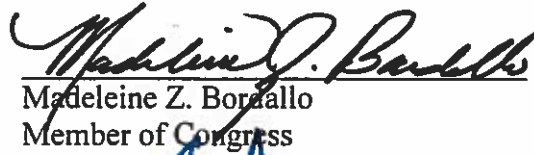
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Nannette Díaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Madeleine Z. Bordallo
Member of Congress



Anthony Brown
Member of Congress



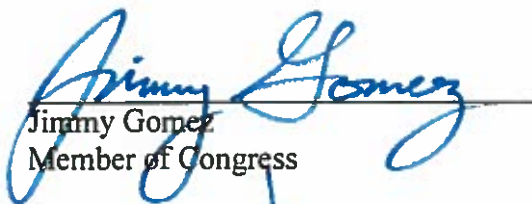
Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress



Ruben Gallego
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Jimmy Gomez
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Colleen Hanabusa
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Alan Lowenthal
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A. Donald McEachin

A. Donald McEachin
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Grace F. Napolitano

Grace F. Napolitano
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Darren Soto

Darren Soto
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Niki Tsongas

Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress