

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 23, 2026

The Honorable Chris Wright
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Wright:

We write to raise concerns about the Department of Energy’s (DOE) decision to strip post-disaster energy security from people in Puerto Rico with disabilities, very low-income households, rural health care facilities, and residents in communities that are the hardest to re-energize after a disaster. DOE’s lack of transparency, wasteful reuse of the funding, disregard for congressional intent, and potentially illegal cancellation of contracts—combined with the resulting increase in energy poverty and loss of energy security—raise serious questions about the Department’s uses of the Puerto Rico-Energy Resilience Fund (ERF). We are requesting a briefing as a first step in our efforts to understand the basis for the Department’s decisions.

Two Electricity Challenges

Puerto Rico faces two major electricity challenges: reliability and high energy bills. Puerto Rico’s reliability challenges and frequent electricity disruptions pose serious dangers to numerous households, such as those that depend on home-based electrical devices for urgent medical or assistive treatment like refrigerated medication, ventilators, oxygen-creators, and dialysis machines. For these families, “a power outage... may become life-threatening in a matter of hours.”¹ These risks are compounded by the absence of a comprehensive registry of electricity-dependent individuals to enable prioritization of service restoration after a disaster.²

The homes with the most reliable electricity supply on the archipelago are those with rooftop solar and batteries, particularly after natural disasters.³ That reality has driven one of the fastest-

¹ Noelle Angelique M. Molinari, et al., *Who’s at Risk When the Power Goes Out? The At-home Electricity-Dependent Population in the United States, 2012*, 23 J. PUBLIC HEALTH MANAG PRACT. 2, 2 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.1097/PHH.0000000000000345>.

² See Eliván Martínez Mercado, *Four Administrations After Hurricane María, Puerto Rico Still Has No Registry of Electricity-Dependent Patients*, CENTRO DE PERIODISMO INVESTIGATIVO (Sep. 25, 2025), <https://periodismoinvestigativo.com/2025/09/puerto-rico-electricity-dependent-patients-registry-maria>.

³ See Maria Gallucci, *Puerto Rico’s Solar Users Are Still Among ‘Fortunate Few’ With Power*, CANARY MEDIA (Sep. 23, 2022), <https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/solar/most-puerto-ricans-still-in-the-dark-after-hurricane-fiona> (finding that “[a]round 97 percent of customers’ batteries had a positive, stable charge” following Hurricane Fiona, allowing those solar customers “to continue powering refrigerators, cellphones, vital medical equipment and other essential devices that use electricity”); Mariah Espada, *Solar Power Is Helping Some Puerto Rico Homes Avoid Hurricane Fiona Blackouts*, TIME (Sep. 20, 2022), <https://time.com/6215138/solar-power-puerto-rico-hurricane-fiona>; Ben Zientara & Catherin Lane, *What happens if you have solar and the power goes out?*, SOLARREVIEWS (2025), <https://www.solarreviews.com/blog/solar-can-help-survive-power-outage> (explaining that “solar panels have a failure rate of only 0.05%”).

growing markets for rooftop solar and batteries in Puerto Rico in the country, now powering approximately 200,000 homes.⁴ As a result, rooftop solar and battery systems now provide more than 1.4 gigawatts of electricity to the otherwise fragile grid and aging generation fleet,⁵ preventing innumerable blackouts from generation shortfalls.⁶ In addition, homes with rooftop solar and batteries participating in Puerto Rico’s virtual power plant (VPP) program helped prevent additional blackouts during the summer of 2025.⁷

Solar energy dispatched from decentralized batteries also helped to *stabilize* power supply with frequency and voltage regulation services. LUMA, the private company responsible for operating Puerto Rico’s electrical power transmission and distribution system, has stated that, with newly required smart inverter settings on newer solar and battery systems, “feeder hosting capacity is increased which enables an increased number of interconnections to a feeder before triggering a supplementary study or the need for grid upgrades.”⁸ Solar energy and storage are strengthening, not straining, the grid—directly undercutting DOE’s stated justification for reallocating the funds.⁹ In contrast, Puerto Rico’s reliance on shipments of imported methane gas and oil have been the foundation for an electricity system that is widely known as the least

⁴ Dánica Coto, *Trump administration scraps multimillion-dollar solar projects in Puerto Rico as grid crumbles*, AP (Jan. 22, 2026), <https://apnews.com/article/puerto-rico-trump-us-solar-energy-projects-cancelled-81250b7eea3f1d15902b44c0e16a1e97>; Cathy Kunkel, *Rooftop Solar in Puerto Rico Reaches 10% as Grid Reliability Continues to Wane*, INSTITUTE FOR ENERGY ECONOMICS & FINANCIAL ANALYSIS (Sep. 11, 2025), <https://ieefa.org/resources/rooftop-solar-puerto-rico-reaches-10-grid-reliability-continues-wane>; PUERTO RICO ENERGY BUREAU, No. NEPR-MI-2019-0016, *Motion Submitting Revised Interconnections Progress Report for October-December 2025 and Related Documents, Exhibit 4* (Mar. 6, 2026) https://energia.pr.gov/numero_orden/nepr-mi-2019-0016.

⁵ Dánica Coto, *Trump administration scraps multimillion-dollar solar projects in Puerto Rico as grid crumbles*, AP (Jan. 22, 2026), <https://apnews.com/article/puerto-rico-trump-us-solar-energy-projects-cancelled-81250b7eea3f1d15902b44c0e16a1e97>; PUERTO RICO ENERGY BUREAU, No. NEPR-MI-2019-0016, *Motion Submitting Revised Interconnections Progress Report for October-December 2025 and Related Documents, Exhibit 4* (Mar. 6, 2026) https://energia.pr.gov/numero_orden/nepr-mi-2019-0016.

⁶ Hanna Jones, *Lessons Learned from Puerto Rico’s First Virtual Power Plant*, at 14, CLEAN ENERGY STATES ALLIANCE (Feb. 10, 2026), <https://www.cesa.org/resource-library/resource/puerto-rico-virtual-power-plant/>.

⁷ See LUMA Puerto Rico (@lumaenergypr), X (Jul. 9, 2025), <https://x.com/lumaenergypr/status/1943040048451981380>; Sunrun Investor Relations, Press Release, Sunrun Dispatches Emergency Power to Help Prevent Grid Blackouts During Energy Shortages (July 21, 2025), <https://investors.sunrun.com/news-events/press-releases/detail/347/sunrun-dispatches-emergency-power-to-help-prevent-grid>; Michelle Lewis, *Sunrun’s 37,000 Home Batteries Are Bailing Out Puerto Rico’s Grid*, ELECTREK (July 21, 2025), <https://electrek.co/2025/07/21/sunrun-37000-home-batteries-are-bailing-out-puerto-ricos-grid>.

⁸ PUERTO RICO ENERGY BUREAU, No. NEPR-MI-2019-0009, *Default Smart Inverter Settings Profile (Smart Inverter Settings Sheets) Approval and Establishment of Working Group Process* (Nov. 7, 2024), <https://energia.pr.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2024/11/20241107-MI20190009-Resolution-and-Order.pdf>.

⁹ The Department of Energy announced the following by email to select Congressional staff: “On January 9, 2026, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) will reallocate up to \$350 million dollars from private, distributed solar systems to continue to support additional practical fixes to improve generation . . . *The rapid, widespread deployment of rooftop solar has created fluctuations in Puerto Rico’s grid, leading to unacceptable instability and fragility.*” Email from Alyssa Petit, Legislative Affairs Specialist, U.S. Dep’t of Energy, to Congressional Staff (Jan. 9, 2026) (emphasis added).

reliable in the country and one that remains highly vulnerable to extreme weather and other disruptions.¹⁰

The second major electricity challenge is exploding electricity costs that make utility bills and everyday purchases more expensive. Residents of Puerto Rico pay residential electricity rates nearly 60 percent above the U.S. average.¹¹ The primary cost driver for Puerto Rico's electricity system is the cost of liquid fuels like oil and methane gas,¹² which is made worse by the added cost of shipping it.¹³ As long as they have to ship their fuels for electricity, their electricity costs will be exorbitant. In contrast, Puerto Rico has an abundance of sunshine. There is enough rooftop solar energy potential to produce all of Puerto Rico's electricity, according to the Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory.¹⁴

Congress Funds Resilience, DOE Takes it Away

In 2022, Congress made a \$1 billion investment in hurricane-proofing Puerto Rico by providing solar panels and batteries for tens of thousands of families.¹⁵ The letter that initiated the proposal from then-Chairman of the Natural Resources Committee Raúl Grijalva and 37 other Members of Congress, requested the funds “for rooftop solar and storage solutions for low-income households and households with people with disabilities in Puerto Rico” specifically because the grid was so consistently unable to keep the lights on after even the smallest weather events, and because solar power and batteries are known to reduce the demands on the grid after natural disasters.¹⁶ The request from dozens of Puerto Rico nongovernmental organizations was equally clear.¹⁷ The language that ultimately passed into law echoed those priorities, calling for

¹⁰ See Ysabelle Kempe, *Sky-high oil prices are about to hit Puerto Rico's grid*, CANARY MEDIA (Mar. 13, 2026), <https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/fossil-fuels/sky-high-oil-prices-puerto-rico-grid>.

¹¹ U.S. ENERGY INFO. ADMIN., *Puerto Rico: State Energy Profile Data*, <https://www.eia.gov/states/RQ/data> (last visited Mar. 12, 2026) (reporting Puerto Rico residential electricity rate of 27.36 cents/kWh, compared to the national average of 17.98 cents/kWh as of December 2025).

¹² Tom Sanzillo, *Solar Offers Critical Path to Escape Puerto Rico Electricity System's Financial Mess*, INSTITUTE FOR ENERGY ECONOMICS & FINANCIAL ANALYSTS (Sep. 13, 2023), <https://ieefa.org/resources/solar-offers-critical-path-escape-puerto-rico-electricity-systems-financial-mess>.

¹³ Ian F. Fergusson, et al., No. R45006, *U.S. Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Exports: Prospects for the Caribbean*, at 12, CONG. RSCH. SERV. (Nov. 1, 2017), <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/R45006> (noting that Puerto Rico “was the largest importer of LNG in the region” because Puerto Rico “is not able to import LNG on LNG tankers” and “the United States has not built a [Jones Act-compliant] LNG tanker since 1980”).

¹⁴ Meghan Mooney & Katy Waechter, *Puerto Rico Low-to-Moderate Income Rooftop PV and Solar Savings Potential*, at 10, NAT'L RENEWABLE ENERGY LABORATORY (Dec. 17, 2020), <https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy21osti/78756.pdf>.

¹⁵ Pub. L. No. 117-328, 136 Stat. 4459 (2022).

¹⁶ Letter from Hon. Raúl M. Grijalva, Chair, H. Comm. on Nat. Res., et al., to Hon. Nancy Pelosi, Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives, and Hon. Rosa DeLauro, Chair, H. Comm. on Appropriations (Oct. 11, 2022), https://democrats-naturalresources.house.gov/imo/media/doc/2022.10.11%20Grijalva%20et%20al%20Letter_Funding%20Rooftop%20Solar%20&%20Storage%20Solutions%20in%20Puerto%20Rico1.pdf

¹⁷ Letter from Boricuas Unidos en la Diáspora, et al., to Hon. Rosa DeLauro, Chair, H. Comm. on Appropriations, et al. (Nov. 21, 2022), <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Essential-Business-Advocacy-Letter-Senate-and-House.pdf>; Letter from Boricuas Unidos en la Diáspora, et al., to Hon. Patrick Leahy,

“activities to improve the resilience of the Puerto Rican electric grid, including grants for low and moderate income households and households that include individuals with disabilities for the purchase and installation of renewable energy, energy storage, and other grid technologies.”¹⁸

Last year, DOE froze all ERF projects, regardless of how far along they were in implementation. In September 2025, DOE took away \$365 million for energy security after disasters that was slated to help 175 small health care facilities serving 300,000 patients and apartment/condo settings serving over 400,000 residents.¹⁹ They announced their intent to instead give the money to the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA)—the public electric utility in Puerto Rico—for undisclosed projects which will not include solar panels and batteries.²⁰

On January 9 of this year, DOE rescinded \$350 million that was dedicated to homes with people with disabilities, people with very low-income, and people whose lights are the last to be turned back on after a disaster.²¹ It is unclear whether DOE has alternative uses in mind for the funds or whether the goal was to prevent solar energy from being used to help elderly residents and children with disabilities stay alive after natural disasters.²²

Chair, S. Comm. on Appropriations, et al. (Nov. 21, 2022), <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Essential-Business-Advocacy-Letter-Senate-and-House.pdf>.

¹⁸ Pub. L. No. 117-328, 136 Stat. 4459, 5212 (2022).

¹⁹ See U.S. Dep’t of Energy, Press Release, Energy Department Announces \$365 Million in Funding to Provide Overdue Support to Puerto Rico’s Power Grid (Sep. 30, 2025), <https://web.archive.org/web/20251129062832/https://www.energy.gov/articles/energy-department-announces-365-million-funding-provide-overdue-support-puerto-ricos-power>.

²⁰ U.S. DEP’T OF ENERGY, *Puerto Rico Energy Resilience Fund Q&As*, <https://www.energy.gov/oe/puerto-rico-energy-resilience-fund-qas> (last visited Mar. 12, 2026).

²¹ The Department of Energy announced the following by email to select Congressional staff: “On January 9, 2026, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) will reallocate up to \$350 million dollars from private, distributed solar systems to continue to support additional practical fixes to improve generation. The former administration pursued a 100% renewable future, which led to intermittent generation deployment policies that have raised energy costs for Puerto Rican families and businesses, threatened the reliability of their energy system, and undermined national security. The Puerto Rico grid cannot afford to run on more distributed solar power. The rapid, widespread deployment of rooftop solar has created fluctuations in Puerto Rico’s grid, leading to unacceptable instability and fragility.” Email from Alyssa Petit, Legislative Affairs Specialist, Off. of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs, U.S. DEP’T OF ENERGY (on file with the Committee); see Maeve Allsup, *The end of DOE’s grid work in Puerto Rico*, LATITUDE MEDIA (February 5, 2026), <https://www.latitudemedia.com/news/the-end-of-does-grid-work-in-puerto-rico/>

²² See José A. Delgado, *Sociedad Civil Pide Asumir la Distribución de los \$1,000 Millones Para Paneles Solares en Puerto Rico*, EL NUEVO DÍA (June 27, 2023), <https://www.elnuevodia.com/noticias/noticias/notas/sociedad-civil-pide-asumir-la-distribucion-de-los-1000-millones-para-paneles-solares-en-puerto-rico>.

ERF Funding Redirected to Rejected Projects and FEMA-Eligible Projects

Lack of Transparency

While the ERF funds were initially allocated in a transparent way that incorporated the communities most affected, ERF funds are now being redirected under a thick blanket of secrecy.²³ PREPA, Genera,²⁴ LUMA, and DOE have all refused to reveal the specific projects for which the funding is to be potentially reallocated, with LUMA and DOE providing only general descriptions. _

However, Committee Democrats have confirmed reports that one of the projects in line to receive the funding is a new methane pipeline across the main island.²⁵ A DOE webpage that was recently and quietly updated appears to further confirm it.²⁶

Failed Liquefied Methane Pipelines

In 2012, a project called *Via Verde*, which would have constructed a new liquefied methane pipeline across the main island, was soundly rejected by the people of Puerto Rico because of grave safety concerns for local communities, the threat of massive damage to sensitive ecosystems, and widespread distrust of the government's claims regarding economic savings.²⁷ The project wasted \$31.9 million ratepayer dollars and became a scandal that plagued Josué Colón, the former Executive Director of PREPA and current Energy Czar of Puerto Rico, for years.²⁸ Another liquefied methane pipeline proposal known as *Gasoducto del Sur* was similarly rejected in 2009 by the people of Puerto Rico. It generated opposition from all gubernatorial

²³ See U.S. DEP'T OF ENERGY, Press Release, The Facts on DOE's Puerto Rico Energy Resilience Fund (Dec. 20, 2023), <https://www.energy.gov/articles/facts-does-puerto-rico-energy-resilience-fund>; U.S. DEP'T OF ENERGY, Solar Ambassador Prize, <https://web.archive.org/web/20250101054617/https://www.energy.gov/gdo/solar-ambassador-prize> (last visited Mar. 12, 2026).

²⁴ Genera PR LLC is a subsidiary of New Fortress Energy, a New York-based global energy infrastructure company. Genera holds a 10-year public-private partnership contract with PREPA, awarded in January 2023, to operate, maintain, and decommission Puerto Rico's thermal generation assets.

²⁵ See Manuel Guillama Capella, *En camino un gasoducto de San Juan a Palo Seco de la mano del gobierno federal: "Tomaría menos de tres meses"*, EL NUEVO DIA, (January 12, 2026)

<https://www.elnuevodia.com/noticias/locales/notas/en-camino-un-gasoducto-de-san-juan-a-palo-seco-de-la-mano-del-gobierno-federal-tomaria-menos-de-tres-meses>.

²⁶ See U.S. DEP'T OF ENERGY, *Puerto Rico Energy Resilience Fund Q&As*, <https://www.energy.gov/oe/puerto-rico-energy-resilience-fund-qas> (last visited Mar. 30, 2026) (referring to "Fuel supply security between San Juan and Palo Seco").

²⁷ See Casa Pueblo, *Evaluación del Gasoducto del Norte Propuesto por la Autoridad de Energía de Puerto Rico (AEE): Respuesta Comunitaria a la Crisis Energética* (Aug. 17, 2010), <https://archivohistoricocasapueblo.org/s/archivo-historico-de-casa-pueblo/item/2402>.

²⁸ OFF. OF THE PUERTO RICO COMPTROLLER, No. CP-21-01, *Informe de Auditoría, Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica de Puerto Rico*, at 10 (Sep. 28, 2020), <https://transicion2020.pr.gov/Agencias/169/Informe%20Relacion%20de%20puestos%20y%20vacantes/CP-21-01.pdf>; *Leadership questions complicate Puerto Rico's struggle to avert grid collapse*, DAILY ENERGY INSIDER (May 16, 2025), <https://dailyenergyinsider.com/featured/48276-leadership-questions-complicate-puerto-ricos-struggle-to-avert-grid-collapse>.

candidates except the incumbent that initiated the project. This proposal wasted another \$59 million ratepayer dollars.²⁹

Trying to force a liquefied methane pipeline project onto the people of Puerto Rico would help lock in the need to import fuels—keeping methane gas prices exorbitant for decades to come, putting ratepayers on the hook for funding it, and adding to already astronomical electricity costs. According to a source who spoke to *El Nuevo Día* about the project, “the participation of federal agencies is not only seen by the state government as a mechanism to obtain the financing that the project would require, but would also serve to mitigate the political effect of the development of the gas pipeline, a method of fuel transport that has historically received strong opposition from community and environmental sectors.”³⁰ Intense local opposition means the pipeline project could again waste tens of millions of dollars that could be used to provide energy security to people with electricity-dependent disabilities.

At least one entity wants the project to proceed. Genera, which runs most power generation in Puerto Rico, is owned by New Fortress Energy, a multinational company currently navigating a massive bankruptcy whose financial future depends primarily on selling more methane gas in Puerto Rico.³¹ These dynamics raise further concerns about whether reallocation decisions being made behind closed doors are for the benefit of everyday Puerto Ricans or special interests with a major financial stake in expanding methane gas use.

Funding Projects with ERF that are Eligible for FEMA Funding

DOE has also indicated it wishes to use ERF funds to repair older methane gas and oil power plants.³² Committee Democrats have learned that the specific fossil fuel plants slated to receive ERF funding for repairs are disproportionately old and fragile, logging months of downtime in some cases even after being repaired. For example, according to LUMA’s Transmission and

²⁹ OFF. OF THE PUERTO RICO COMPTROLLER, No. CP-21-01, *Informe de Auditoría, Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica de Puerto Rico*, at 10 (Sep. 28, 2020), <https://transicion2020.pr.gov/Agencias/169/Informe%20Relacion%20de%20puestos%20y%20vacantes/CP-21-01.pdf>.

³⁰ Manuel Guillama Capella, *En camino un gasoducto de San Juan a Palo Seco de la mano del gobierno federal: “Tomaría menos de tres meses”*, *EL NUEVO DÍA*, (January 12, 2026) <https://www.elnuevodia.com/noticias/locales/notas/en-camino-un-gasoducto-de-san-juan-a-palo-seco-de-la-mano-del-gobierno-federal-tomaria-menos-de-tres-meses>.

³¹ Ruth Liao, Jim Wyss & Dylan Sloan, *Billionaire Needing a Win Gets Welcome Reprieve in Puerto Rico*, *BLOOMBERG* (Aug. 7, 2025), <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-08-07/puerto-rico-board-firings-boost-hand-of-aston-villa-owner-wes-edens>; *SIMPLY WALL ST*, *NFE: Puerto Rico LNG Agreement Will Drive Stronger Recovery Ahead*, <https://simplywall.st/community/narratives/us/energy/nasdaq-nfe/new-fortress-energy/ajegi4z8-nfe-puerto-rico-lng-agreement-will-drive-stronger-recovery-ahead> (last visited Mar. 12, 2026).

³² See U.S. Dep’t of Energy, *Puerto Rico Energy Resilience Fund Q&As*, <https://www.energy.gov/oe/puerto-rico-energy-resilience-fund-qas> (last visited Mar. 12, 2026); José A. Delgado, *How Will the \$365 Million That the Federal Government Took Away from Solar Projects in Puerto Rico Be Used? Here Is What Is Known*, *EL NUEVO DÍA* (May 30, 2025), <https://www.elnuevodia.com/english/news/story/how-will-the-365-million-that-the-federal-government-took-away-from-solar-projects-in-puerto-rico-be-used-here-is-what-is-known> (reporting that “DOE will prioritize ‘dispatch of base load generation units, vegetation control support to protect transmission lines, and modernization of aging infrastructure’”).

Distribution System Monthly Reports, between May 2024 and May 2025, 12 fossil fuel power plant units experienced over 800 outages.³³ A number of the same plants are in line to get ERF funding. Since the high failure rate of the fossil power plants is the result of their age, there is little reason to think that major investments in propping them up until their next failure would save more lives in the long term than the original ERF investments in solar. In addition, these are the kinds of projects Congress had in mind when allocating \$13 billion in disaster funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to get the electricity system up to performance standards.³⁴ Using ERF funds to convert the old oil-burning plants to methane gas-burners is yet another Genera bailout, since those conversions would further lock the people of Puerto Rico into energy insecurity and energy poverty.

DOE has also stated its desire to use ERF money to help repair the aging grid, including for “vegetation control support to protect transmission lines, and modernization of aging infrastructure.”³⁵ Congress funded FEMA to address projects like these too. But the Trump Administration has slow-walked the release of the funds.³⁶ Of the \$1.2 billion needed for vegetation clearing around densely overgrown transmission and distribution lines, substations, and facility access roads, FEMA had disbursed only \$24 million—or 2 percent—as of December 2025.³⁷ After experiencing significant pressure to release more funding, FEMA disbursed an additional \$10 million in March 2026.³⁸ However, some vegetation clearing projects have been waiting for FEMA approval since the Summer of 2025.³⁹

Transformer installations are also eligible for FEMA funding. A substation transformer replacement and a transformer cable replacement at Costa Sur are just two examples of projects that are waiting for FEMA to release the funds.⁴⁰ People with disabilities should not be made to

³³ Information on file with the Committee.

³⁴ See U.S. Dep’t of Homeland Security, Off. of the Inspector Gen., *FEMA Must Provide Additional Technical Assistance to Support the Timely Rebuilding of Puerto Rico’s Electrical Grid* (OIG-25-39), (Sept. 11, 2025), <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/2025-09/OIG-25-39-Sep25.pdf>.

³⁵ José A. Delgado, *How Will the \$365 Million That the Federal Government Took Away from Solar Projects in Puerto Rico Be Used? Here Is What Is Known*, EL NUEVO DÍA (May 30, 2025), <https://www.elnuevodia.com/english/news/story/how-will-the-365-million-that-the-federal-government-took-away-from-solar-projects-in-puerto-rico-be-used-here-is-what-is-known>.

³⁶ Zolan Kanno-Youngs & Erica L. Green, *Noem’s New Rules for FEMA Aid Create Backlog as Disasters Mount*, N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 27, 2026), <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/27/climate/fema-aid-kristi-noem.html>.

³⁷ LUMA, *Progress Update*, at 11 (October 2025) (on file with the Committee).

³⁸ GOV’T OF PUERTO RICO, CENTRAL OFF. FOR RECOVERY, RECONSTRUCTION & RESILIENCY, *Energy, Water, Education, and Public Housing Accelerated Projects Execution*, <https://recovery.pr.gov/en/road-to-recovery/pa-faast/map?applicant=141&keyword=vegetation> (last visited Mar. 31, 2026).

³⁹ *Id.*

⁴⁰ *Public Assistance Obligated: Transformer Projects*, P.R. Disaster Recovery Transparency Portal, https://recovery.pr.gov/en/financial-analysis/table-view/pa-obligated?disaster=1&applicantName=141§or=2&sortColumn=pw_number&sortValue=asc&pageSize=15&pageOffset=0&keyword=transformer (last visited Mar. 12, 2026) (showing projects PA-02-PR-4339-PW-108161 and PA-02-PR-4339-PW-108163 with approximately \$4.4 million obligated but not disbursed for Hurricane Maria recovery as of Mar. 11, 2026).

surrender their life-saving energy security to fill a funding gap created by Donald Trump's FEMA funding delays.

Broken Promises

The people of Puerto Rico have repeatedly been promised a more reliable grid over the last ten years: first when PROMESA passed to try to address the archipelago's debt, again after Hurricanes Maria and Irma, again after a series of earthquakes, again when they were told that privatizing the electric utility would make the difference, and again with changes of federal and territorial administrations. Now, DOE is trying to convince the people of Puerto Rico that taking away energy security from seniors will finally deliver the reliable grid they have long been promised. Worse, solar contracts with thousands of families were signed and in the process of being executed.⁴¹ For many of them, millions of dollars of equipment had already been purchased. Committee Democrats have learned that the solar equipment has been sitting in warehouses in Puerto Rico since last year when DOE froze all installations. It has now been over a year since the ERF money was initially frozen; the new projects that are reported to receive the money have still not been determined, much less started construction. Had those solar projects been allowed to proceed, most would already be providing energy security for thousands of vulnerable families and megawatts of reliable electricity for the grid that desperately needs it.

Under Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources has jurisdiction to conduct oversight of all matters regarding insular areas of the United States to inform potential legislative reforms. Accordingly, to assist with the Committee's oversight, please provide a briefing to be scheduled as soon as possible but no later than 5:00pm on April 30, 2026, as a first step in this investigation. At that briefing, DOE should be prepared to cover the following topics:

1. Regarding the decision to remove ERF funding:
 - a. Legal analysis showing that changes in spending are consistent with congressional intent in appropriating the Puerto Rico Energy Resilience Fund;
 - b. DOE's estimate of the number of lives that may be at risk due to the loss of energy security that ERF would have provided with solar power and battery systems;
 - c. A list of health care facilities that would have been eligible to receive the ERF funding under the original allocation;

⁴¹ Maeve Allsup, *The end of DOE's grid work in Puerto Rico*, LATITUDE MEDIA (Feb. 5, 2026), <https://www.latitudemedia.com/news/the-end-of-does-grid-work-in-puerto-rico>; ENV'T DEF. FUND, *The U.S. Department of Energy Cancels Funding for Community Solar Energy Projects in Puerto Rico* (Jan. 16, 2026), <https://www.edf.org/media/us-department-energy-cancels-funding-community-solar-energy-projects-puerto-rico>.

- d. The number of households that passed the initial eligibility approval phase of the ERF award process;
 - e. The number of households that passed the home inspection phase and were deemed eligible for a system;
 - f. The number of installations completed prior to the funding freeze;
 - g. The number of electricity-dependent individuals who had passed DOE's initial eligibility determination but did not receive solar and battery systems because DOE froze ERF funding;
 - h. The number of households with signed contracts that were canceled as a result of the freeze;
 - i. The number of households for which equipment had been purchased but installation was not permitted because DOE froze the funding; and
 - j. Any guarantees DOE can offer that the funding reallocations will better meet the urgent needs of electricity-dependent, low-income residents of Puerto Rico and last-mile communities;
2. Regarding DOE's justifications for moving the reallocation:
 - a. Analysis showing people with disabilities will benefit sooner if ERF funds are taken from them and given to FEMA-eligible projects;
 - b. Evidence that people in Puerto Rico who will be affected most by the decision to move ERF funding were directly consulted, including the disability community, very low income community, and last mile community;
 - c. Evidence that the reallocation of ERF funds will save ratepayers money, including an analysis of whether the disability community, very low income community, and last mile community will benefit more from the reallocation;
 - d. Evidence that the reallocation of ERF funds will provide more energy security to the disability community, very low income community, and last mile community;
3. Regarding the ultimate uses of the funding:
 - a. A complete list of all projects under consideration to receive reallocated ERF funds;

- b. A description of the process used to identify, evaluate, and select recipients of reallocated ERF funds;
- c. Evidence detailing whether the Government of Puerto Rico was afforded the ability to allow the initial allocation of the ERF funds to proceed unchanged; and
- d. The names, titles, and email addresses for all DOE staff that worked on the ERF since January 20, 2025.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. Please contact the minority staff of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the House Committee on Natural Resources at (202) 225-6065 with any questions about this request. I look forward to your prompt response.

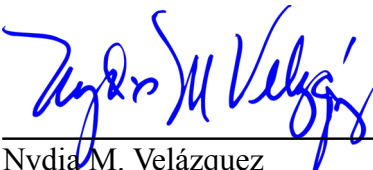
Sincerely,



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress
Ranking Member, Committee
on Natural Resources



Pablo José Hernández
Member of Congress



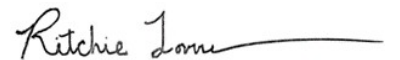
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress



Nellie Pou
Member of Congress



Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress



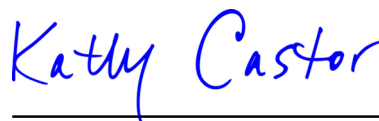
Adriano Espaillat
Chair
Congressional Hispanic
Caucus



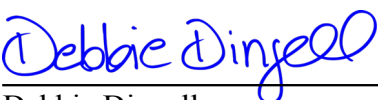
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



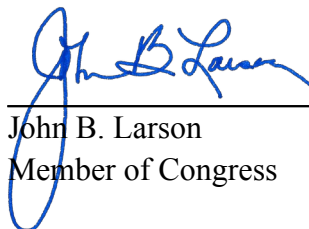
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



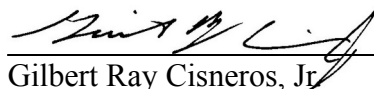
Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress



Maxine Dexter
Member of Congress



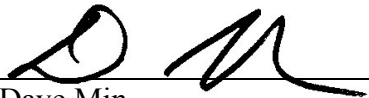
Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Dave Min
Member of Congress



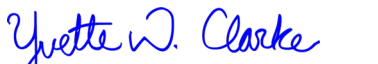
Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress



Adelta S. Grijalva
Member of Congress



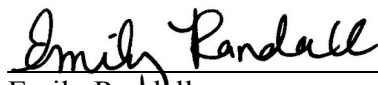
Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



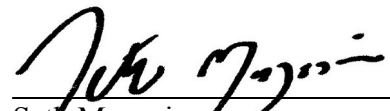
Maxwell Alejandro Frost
Member of Congress



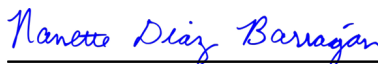
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Emily Randall
Member of Congress



Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



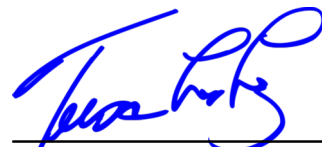
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



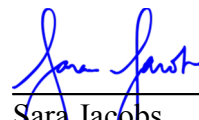
Robert J. Menendez
Member of Congress



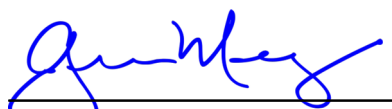
Teresa Leger Fernández
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Mark Takano
Member of Congress



Ed Case
Member of Congress



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress