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September 29, 2017

Hon. Donald J. Trump
 President of the United States of America
 The White House
 1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
 Washington DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We, the members of the New York State Puerto Rican/ Hispanic Task Force along with some of our legislative colleagues are writing to you in an effort to urge your Administration to help solve the humanitarian crisis faced by the people of U.S Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. We know you are aware of the grave and life-threatening situation caused by recent hurricanes impacting both territories and there is no need to reiterate the level of destruction caused by the severe weather that has obliterated normal life for our fellow Americans.

What is important at this point is the ability of our federal government to mobilize all its brainpower and resources to end the escalating human suffering now in clear display to the world in the Caribbean. The mass use of military expertise and equipment to bring food, water and medical supplies to the entire region must be of the highest priority. As Commander-in-Chief of our nation, a vast amount of power resides with you to address the relief and rebuilding of these regions which will need years of diligent federal assistance and oversight.

Recovery and relief efforts for Puerto Rico must also be extended to assist mainland communities which are experiencing an influx of these climate refugees. Mainland communities will face challenges funding housing, medical, food assistance and classroom instruction for tens of thousands expected to leave the islands temporarily and permanently. Therefore, we ask that your Administration consider the following issues as part of the short-term and long-term relief, recovery and rebuilding efforts for the region:

- An ongoing set of multi-billion dollar aid packages for Puerto Rico recovery and rebuilding efforts;
- Extend the recent lifting of the Jones Act until the region is rebuilt to help utilize all available resources;
- Require FEMA to provide assistance to mainland communities hosting mass exodus from region;
- Provide Medicaid/Medicare waivers for access to health services on mainland for Puerto Ricans
- Allow healthcare professionals from Puerto Rico to work with their credentials in the mainland;
- Provide housing assistance and food assistance to families temporarily leaving islands; and
- Provide funding for school districts which will need to hire additional teachers and ELL staff.

Comprehensive efforts to deal with the current crisis needs to, at a minimum, include all of the items listed above. The crisis we are experiencing is a prelude to the matters that will now become part of our daily responsibilities as government leaders. Mr. President, your leadership on these issues at this moment in time will set into practice what should be the standard to efficient and caring response to human suffering of Americans in its territories. Thank you for your attention to this critically important matter.

Sincerely,

Carl E. Heastie
 Hon. Carl E. Heastie

Marcos A. Crespo
 Hon. Marcos Crespo