

December 18, 2017

The Honorable Ricardo Rosselló  
Office of Governor  
La Fortaleza  
P.O. Box 9020082  
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00902-0082

To Governor Rosselló:

On behalf of the vulnerable people who are still struggling after Hurricanes Irma and Maria, we, the undersigned 197 members of the Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition, urge you to formally request robust federal housing resources and programs as soon as possible. This includes requesting the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Disaster Housing Assistance Program (DHAP) for Puerto Rican families who have been displaced to the U.S. mainland, as well as resources to rebuild affordable rental homes in Puerto Rico, including a special allocation of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, national Housing Trust Fund, HOME Investment Partnerships Program, and New Markets Tax Credit.

History has shown us that DHAP is an effective and proven solution for individuals and families with the greatest needs – including low income seniors, people with disabilities, families with children, veterans, people experiencing homelessness, and other at-risk populations – after devastating disasters. By providing temporary rental assistance and wrap-around case management, DHAP helps the lowest income families find permanent housing solutions, secure employment, and connect to public benefits as they rebuild their lives and get back on their feet.

Today, we need DHAP more than ever. After Hurricanes Irma and Maria, for example, low income families who have been displaced to the U.S. mainland are facing significant barriers to accessing FEMA's transitional shelter assistance. FEMA's transitional shelter program must be renewed every 14 days, creating great instability for those relying on it. Because it expires permanently six months after the initial disaster declaration, transitional shelter will create severe housing instability for many households. Moreover, hotels participating in FEMA's transitional shelter program often charge daily "resort" fees, require security deposits, and require that displaced households have credit cards – all of which are barriers for low income households that have already depleted any savings that they may have had and that are often unbanked or underbanked.

Without DHAP, displaced, low income families often have little choice but to move into uninhabitable or overcrowded homes, stay at shelters, or sleep in their cars or on the streets. According to the [Orlando Sentinel](#) and other local news sources, there are numerous accounts of individuals and families displaced from Puerto Rico who are unable to access FEMA's transitional housing assistance and who are facing enormous issues in finding accessible, affordable rental homes in Florida and other U.S. states.

Before HUD can stand up its DHAP program, however, FEMA must enter into an interagency agreement with HUD. While FEMA has the authority to do this without any further state action, the agency has been reticent to do so without a request from your office. **We urge you to request that FEMA enter into an interagency agreement with HUD immediately to allow HUD to stand up its DHAP program to serve eligible hurricane survivors displaced from Puerto Rico to the U.S. mainland.**

Florida and other states experiencing an influx of displaced Puerto Rican families suffer from a severe shortage of affordable rental homes. Even before the storms, there were only 27 affordable and available homes for 100 families with extremely low incomes in Florida. Cities like Orlando and Miami have even fewer affordable and available homes, with 18 and 21 homes, respectively, for every 100 extremely low income households. The damage caused by Hurricanes Irma and Maria means that there is even less supply and more demand.

**We also urge you to request other targeted federal housing and community development resources that can be used to rebuild communities in Puerto Rico and ensure that the current affordable rental housing crisis across the island is not made worse.** This includes a special allocation of four specific housing programs: the National Housing Trust Fund, a new federal resource designed specifically to address the shortage of affordable rental housing for people with the greatest needs; Low Income Housing Tax Credits, along with broadly supported modifications to increase efficiency and expand the program's reach to the lowest income households; HOME Investment Partnerships program funding; and New Markets Tax Credits.

DHAP and these targeted resources are necessary to ensure that the housing recovery is complete, equitable, and speedy.

Sincerely,

**Puerto Rico Organizations**

Coalición de Coaliciones Pro Personas sin Hogar de PR, Inc.  
MAVI-NEADA  
National Church Residences  
Pathstone Corporation  
Volunteers of America, Inc.

**National Organizations**

American Academy of Housing and Communities  
American Baptist Home Mission Societies  
Americans for Financial Reform  
Ballad Spahr  
Boston Capital  
Catholic Charities USA  
Center for American Progress  
Center for Community Change  
Center for Popular Democracy  
Children's Defense Fund  
Children's Leadership Council  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Corporation for Supportive Housing  
Council on Affordable and Rural Housing  
Davis and Harman  
Du and Associates  
Enterprise Community Partners

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America  
Grounded Solutions Network  
Habitat for Humanity International  
Hawkins Delafield and Wood  
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters - USA-JPIC  
Housing Assistance Council  
Housing Partnership Network  
JPMorgan Chase  
Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights  
Local Initiatives Support Corporation  
LOCUS  
Low Income Investment Fund  
Make Room  
Money Management International  
Mortgage Bankers Association  
National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations  
National Alliance to End Homelessness  
National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders  
National Association of Affordable Housing Lenders  
National Center for Healthy Housing  
National Coalition for Latinxs with Disabilities  
National Coalition for the Homeless  
National Community Development Association  
National Consumer Law Center  
National Fair Housing Alliance  
National Health Care for the Homeless Council  
National Housing & Rehabilitation Association  
National Housing Law Project  
National Housing Resource Center  
National Housing Trust  
National Law Center for Homelessness and Poverty  
National League of Cities  
National Leased Housing Association  
National Low Income Housing Coalition  
National Network to End Domestic Violence  
National Resource Defense Council  
National Stabilization Trust  
National Urban League  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
Nixon Peabody  
Oxfam America  
PolicyLink

Poverty and Race Research Action Council  
 Preservation of Affordable Housing, Inc.  
 Prosperity Now  
 Right to the City  
 Shriver Center  
 Smart Growth America  
 Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future  
 Technical Assistance Collaborative  
 The Arc of the United States  
 The Schiff Group  
 The Workers Center  
 UnidosUS  
 United Way  
 Voices for Civil Justice

**State and Local Organizations and Governments**

Fair Housing Center of Northern Alabama	Alabama
Fort Smith Community Development Department	Arkansas
California Rural Legal Aid	California
Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California	California
Fair Housing Council of the San Fernando Valley	California
Fair Housing of Northern California	California
Greater Napa Valley Fair Housing Center	California
Housing California	California
Inland Fair Housing and Mediation Board	California
Napa Fair Housing	California
Project Sentinel	California
PYATOK Architects	California
Rural Communities Housing Development Corporation	California
Western Center on Law and Poverty	California
Connecticut Housing Coalition	Connecticut
Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches, Inc.	Florida
Affordable Homeownership Foundation, Inc.	Florida
Arcadia DeSoto Habitat for Humanity	Florida
Bay Area Legal Services	Florida
Big Bend Continuum of Care	Florida
Brevard Neighborhood Development Coalition	Florida
Catalyst Miami	Florida
Catholic Charities of Central Florida	Florida
Charlotte County Government	Florida
City of Deltona	Florida
City of Fort Myers	Florida
City of Pompano Beach	Florida

Community Hope Center	Florida
Councilwoman Teresa Watkins Brown, City of Fort Myers	Florida
De Hostos Senior Center, Inc.	Florida
disAbility Solutions	Florida
Fair Housing Center of the Greater Palm Beaches	Florida
Family Matters of Flagler	Florida
First Community Christian Pentecostal Church of God	Florida
Florida Alliance of Community Development Corporations	Florida
Florida Housing Coalition	Florida
Florida Legal Services	Florida
Florida Supportive Housing Coalition	Florida
Habitat for Humanity Florida	Florida
Habitat for Humanity of Lee and Hendry Counties	Florida
Housing Foundation of America, Inc.	Florida
Housing Leadership Council	Florida
Invictus Development	Florida
Jacksonville Local Initiatives Support Corp	Florida
Marion County Homeless Council	Florida
Meridian Behavioral Healthcare	Florida
Metro North Community Development Corporation	Florida
Miami Homes For All	Florida
Missio Dei Community	Florida
Mission House, Inc.	Florida
National Foundation for Debt Management	Florida
New Florida Majority	Florida
Organize Florida	Florida
Pinellas Homeless Leadership Board	Florida
Refuge Ministries of Tampa Bay/International	Florida
Solar and Energy Loan Fund (SELF)	Florida
Soukup Strategic Solutions	Florida
St. Francis House	Florida
St. Johns Housing Partnership, Inc.	Florida
Tarpon Springs Housing Authority	Florida
The Community Justice Project	Florida
The Hendricks Company	Florida
The Wright Foundation	Florida
Trailblazers Unlimited, Inc.	Florida
United Way of Broward County	Florida
United Way of Florida	Florida
Winter Haven Housing Authority	Florida
Youth and Family Alternatives, Inc.	Florida
Money Management International	Georgia
Fair Share Housing	New Jersey

Monarch Housing	New Jersey
Northern Ocean Habitat for Humanity	New Jersey
Arbor Housing and Development	New York
Care for the Homeless	New York
Center for NYC Neighborhoods	New York
Community League of The Heights, Inc.	New York
Fordham Bedford Housing Corporation	New York
Morningside Housing Multicultural Tenant Organization	New York
New York City Housing Development Corporation	New York
New York Housing Conference	New York
Rebuilding Together NYC	New York
Rensselaer Housing Authority	New York
Tenants & Neighbors	New York
Allentown Housing Authority	Pennsylvania
The Fifteenth Avenue Baptist Community Development Corporation	Tennessee
Cambridge Development Group	Texas
Center for Public Policy Priorities	Texas
Community Hope Center	Texas
Easter Seal Houston	Texas
ECHOES	Texas
Family Restoration and Economic Empowerment	Texas
HAAM Ministries	Texas
House the Homeless, Inc.	Texas
Houston Center for Independent Living	Texas
Houston Center on Budget and Policy Priorities	Texas
Houston Coalition for the Homeless	Texas
Houston Local Initiatives Support Corp	Texas
I Am Pleased Development Center	Texas
Inclusive Communities	Texas
Invest in Texas	Texas
My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center	Texas
National Coalition for the Homeless (Portland)	Texas
New Hope Housing	Texas
Northwest Assistance Ministries	Texas
Organize Texas	Texas
San Antonio Local Initiatives Support Corp	Texas
Texas Appleseed	Texas
Texas Association of Community Development Corporations	Texas
Texas Homeless Network	Texas
Texas Housers	Texas
Texas Organizing Project	Texas
Texas Tenants' Union	Texas
True Casa Consulting	Texas

US Virgin Islands Housing Authority  
Family Promise  
Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition  
Greenfield Institute  
Wisconsin Partnership for Housing Development

USVI  
Utah  
Vermont  
Washington  
Wisconsin

CC: Congressional Delegation