

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 15, 2018

The Honorable William Long
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Administrator Long:

We write to urge swift approval for the Direct Lease program to benefit victims of Hurricane Maria who have relocated to the mainland and are in need of this critical assistance. This program will ensure displaced Puerto Rican families have access to reliable temporary housing solutions.

As you are well aware, it has been almost five months since Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico, and the island is still facing significant housing issues in its recovery process. Parts of the island continue to remain without reliable access to power and water. As a result, many displaced Puerto Ricans are unable to return to the island at this time, and are in need of longer-term housing solutions on the mainland.

It is estimated that Florida has opened its schools, hospitals and housing facilities to approximately 200,000 Puerto Ricans who have arrived since Hurricane Maria. However, state and local resources are limited as a result of the devastating hurricane season last fall. While the Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) program has provided many Puerto Ricans on the mainland temporary housing relief, this program is not intended to be a long-term housing solution. The FEMA Direct Lease program, however, would provide much needed housing assistance directly to displaced Puerto Ricans who desperately need it.

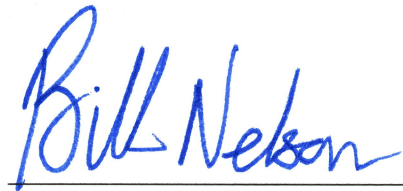
The federal government must continue to play an active role in addressing the housing issues facing Puerto Ricans displaced by Hurricane Maria. Thus, we urge FEMA to expedite the approval of Puerto Rico's request for Direct Lease assistance.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Bill Nelson
U.S. Senator