

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 1, 2018

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Sessions:

We write to express concern with regard to the security situation in Puerto Rico as the island struggles to recover from the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria.

It has been nearly four months since Hurricane Maria made landfall on Puerto Rico and parts of the island remain without power, leaving businesses to remain closed and leaving many residents unemployed. Meanwhile, Puerto Rico's police department is facing an increase in absences among officers due to months of outstanding overtime payments.

Accounts from Puerto Rico have detailed an increase in violent crime. According to recent media reports, there were at least 46 homicides in Puerto Rico last month alone, twice the rate of this time last year. A number of these murders are reportedly attributed to drug gangs who are taking advantage of the decreased police presence and reestablishing territory in the wake of Hurricane Maria's devastation.

It is crucial that the resources of the federal government are properly used to ensure the safety and security of Americans in Puerto Rico. We urge you to engage with the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to best determine how federal law enforcement can assist the territory in these trying times.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Bill Nelson
U.S. Senator