

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 25, 2018

The Honorable Ricardo Rosselló Nevares  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico  
La Fortaleza  
PO Box 9020082  
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00902-0082

Dear Governor Rosselló:

While the Puerto Rican government continues to work diligently in its recovery process on the island, I write to ensure Puerto Rican families displaced by Hurricane Maria on the mainland are receiving all relief services available to them. Specifically, federal resources require formal requests from a governor following a natural disaster.

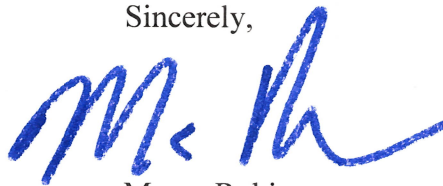
As you know, Florida has opened its schools, hospitals and housing facilities to the estimated 200,000 Puerto Ricans who have arrived in the state since Hurricane Maria made landfall in September. While our state and local governments are ready and willing to assist, their resources are limited after a devastating Atlantic hurricane season. The federal government has the programs and resources necessary to supplement our local governments, but many of these programs require formal requests from the Puerto Rico government.

In particular, it is critical that the State of Florida has flexibility in its ability to provide displaced Puerto Ricans with affordable housing options. One housing initiative that would provide this additional flexibility is the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Direct Lease program. The FEMA Direct Lease program provides temporary housing units directly to survivors when rental resources are unavailable. Additionally, it ensures that units are within a reasonable distance of community services, such as schools and grocery stores, so that families are not unduly burdened during this extremely difficult period.

I have seen firsthand the goodwill of Floridians and Puerto Ricans, who have opened their hearts and homes after a deadly hurricane season. While we cannot change the devastation that has occurred, it is vital that you formally make this request, which will better assist Puerto Rican families in Florida in finding available housing opportunities.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator