



October 5, 2022

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

The Honorable Marcia L. Fudge
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
Development
451 7th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20410

The Honorable Jennifer M. Granholm
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Administrator Criswell, Secretary Granholm, and Secretary Fudge,

More than ten days after Hurricane Fiona, one-third of Puerto Rican residents are still without power. We cannot abandon our fellow Americans in Puerto Rico to long periods before electricity is restored and endless cycles of power outages. We urge you to continue to work closely with the government of Puerto Rico and its relevant institutions to restore power to impacted people immediately and to reconstruct the energy infrastructure with long-term solutions that boost resiliency, reliability, and renewable energy sources.

The people of Puerto Rico deserve stable, dependable power. It is imperative we do whatever it takes to improve Puerto Rico's dilapidated electric grid. Puerto Rico suffered immensely from Hurricane Maria's destruction five years ago, with some residents losing power for nearly a year. Despite the \$28 billion obligated for repairs to the island, residents reported power interruptions continuing in subsequent years.¹ Hurricane Fiona has made clear that a full overhaul to build real resilience into the energy infrastructure is urgently and desperately needed.

As Puerto Rico rebuilds, we are calling upon you and your agencies to continue to work with the government of Puerto Rico in an all-of-government response to modernize and strengthen Puerto Rico's electric grid. We need to restore power and provide relief to people struggling right now, but we also need to expeditiously restructure and rebuild the grid to ensure long-term resiliency and reliability. The focus should be on solutions that prevent future catastrophic power losses by reducing failure risks in energy infrastructure through microgrids, renewable resources, and more. Should you run into any barriers to the quick development and implementation of such solutions that require Congressional action to address, please let us know so we can work together to ensure Puerto Rico's electric grid is more resilient going forward.

¹ Arelis Hernández, "They were still rebuilding 5 years after Hurricane Maria. Then Fiona hit." *Washington Post*, (Washington, D.C.), September 20, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2022/09/20/hurricane-maria-five-years-later/>.

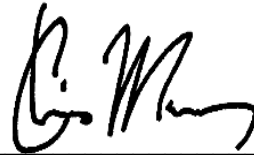
While we appreciate that work has already been done, we cannot stress to you enough the urgency of your continued prompt and thorough collaboration with the government of Puerto Rico and its relevant institutions to restore power in the short-term and sustainably rebuild in the long-term. We stand ready to assist you as necessary. We look forward to working with you to ensure a robust, resilient, and rebuilt electric grid in Puerto Rico.

Thank you for your attention to this critically important matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senate



CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY
United States Senate