

CONGRESSMAN ADRIANO ESPAILLAT 10-POINT PLAN TO ADDRESS PUERTO RICO HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

1. **Enact an immediate \$20 billion emergency relief package for Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands.** Congress needs to act on a humanitarian emergency relief package for Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands no later than this week. It is estimated that Puerto Rico will need \$85 billion for their recovery efforts. At a minimum, Congress needs to enact a \$20 billion emergency relief package for Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands.
2. **Hold a hearing on Puerto Rico recovery efforts and set up a Task Force to Coordinate Relief Efforts in Puerto Rico and other areas impacted by natural disasters.** The delayed response in Puerto Rico was egregious. I join my colleagues in calling for a hearing on Puerto Rico recovery efforts, and for a full assessment on how to mitigate delayed reactions in the future, and a strategic plan on long-term recovery efforts for Puerto Rico. As my colleagues have stated, the Hurricane Sandy Task Force resulted in a comprehensive plan developed by federal, state, and local stakeholders which then helped aid the recovery effort in New York City and elsewhere. A similar plan is needed for all of the areas affected during this hurricane season.
3. **Waive the Jones Act permanently for diesel and fuel.** The latest 10-day waiver by the Trump Administration is not nearly enough time, and the Jones Act needs to be waived for at least a year so that response and rebuilding efforts are not encumbered, and I also call for a permanent waiver for diesel and fuel.
4. **Send USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier, more military personnel, and immediate deployment of an emergency response team to Puerto Rico as soon as possible.** I joined 145 of my colleagues in Congress in urging the president to deploy the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier and increase personnel to assist local law enforcement. Unfortunately, the aircraft carrier, which is needed to help clear roads, rescue stranded residents and deliver emergency supplies, is still nowhere to be seen.
5. **Repair the telecommunications system and get generators working at full capacity.** While landline telephones are back on track, only a quarter of the telecommunications network has been repaired. We need to send trained certified electrical engineers to expand their efforts in getting Puerto Rico's telecommunications system fully functioning, and to get their generators to operate at the level they need.
6. **Authorize army engineers to fix the generators in the hospital.** There are army engineers on the ground, who have completed assessment, but need

authorization to fix the generators in the hospital. There needs to be a new wiring system for the hospital during reconstruction. The army experts explained that many generators were only working at below 30%, while the generators need to be used at 60-80%.

7. **Solicit help from medical institutions across the country to transport children with life threatening conditions.** HHS has informed me that they have 500 personnel on the ground; however, they need to provide more medicine and stockpile, and help get children with life threatening conditions, the medical attention they need.
8. **Restore funding for municipalities in Puerto Rico.** To date, municipalities in Puerto Rico have paid an estimated \$175 million to pay for Puerto Rico's debt. The money should be given back until the crisis stabilizes.
9. **Puerto Rico needs truck drivers to help get fuel, water, food, and medicine to families.** There are downed power lines, broken bridges, and damaged roads that are making it difficult to get supplies in the hands of families whose supplies are dwindling by the day. We need to ask neighboring countries to help volunteer drivers to get necessary supplies delivered to some of the most remote parts of the Island.
10. **We need to get ahead of potential epidemics and a public health crisis.** I visited Hospital San Francisco, which had 43 patients, 13 were in critical condition, and some were on ventilators and without air conditioning. This is a formula for death, and a public health crisis. These patients were transferred to other local hospitals.

###

First elected to Congress in 2016, Rep. Adriano Espaillat is serving his first term in Congress where he serves as a member of the influential U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee, the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, and the House Select Committee on Small Business. He is a member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) and serves in a leadership role as CHC Freshman Representative to the Democratic Caucus. He is also chairman of the CHC Task Force for Transportation, Infrastructure and Housing. Rep. Espaillat's Congressional District includes Harlem, East Harlem, northern Manhattan and the north-west Bronx. To find out more about Rep. Espaillat, visit online at <https://espaillat.house.gov/>.