

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-5400

September 19, 2017

The Honorable James Richard "Rick" Perry  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20585

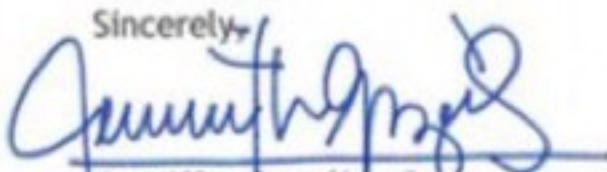
Dear Secretary Perry:

The following letter is to bring to your attention the difficulties faced by my constituents in Puerto Rico due to the island's electric power grid system. The power grid was already structurally weak when it was severely affected by the trajectory of Hurricane Irma on September 6, 2017, a category 5 hurricane that left close to 68% of the island's population without power. Currently, it stands to sustain even greater damages in the wake of Hurricane Maria, another category 5 hurricane that threatens to delay the island's recovery process and further diminish my constituent's access to power, and in some instances water, in the foreseeable future.

The power plants on the island have a median age of 44 years, well beyond the industry average of 18 years, resulting in frequent power outages. In addition, electricity rates are extremely high forcing island residents to pay a premium for what is essentially a faulty service due to outdated infrastructure. Now, a combination of weak infrastructure and the looming threat of yet another potentially devastating category 5 hurricane, will either limit or prevent my constituents from receiving essential services, like electricity, that are necessary for their daily lives, financial wellbeing, and general recovery from natural disasters like Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria.

I would like to request your assistance with assessing the situation at the Puerto Rico Power Electric Authority (PREPA) after Hurricane Maria makes landfall, while also identifying avenues in which the Department can provide funding and support for aid and timely restoration. It is critical that Puerto Rico is prioritized as part of this assessment and that all Department of Energy relief programs and resources are fully extended to Puerto Rico due to the island's frail but vital electric system that will most likely continue to decay as weather conditions worsen. Please do not hesitate to contact my Congressional Office should you identify ways in which we can help with accommodating this request.

Sincerely,



Jenniffer González Colón  
Member of Congress

Cc: William B. "Brock" Long  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency