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Brian Sullivan

(202) 708-0685      FOR RELEASE

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## HUD AWARDS \$1.5 BILLION TO HELP PUERTO RICO RECOVER FROM HURRICANES IRMA AND MARIA

Disaster recovery funds to help repair damaged housing and businesses

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) today awarded more than \$1.5 billion to help Puerto Rico to recover from Hurricanes Irma and Maria. HUD's Deputy Secretary Pamela Hughes Patenaude announced the disaster recovery grants with Governor Ricardo Rosselló during her third visit to the island since Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

These recovery funds awarded today are provided through HUD's Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program and will support long-term recovery of seriously damaged housing and local businesses in Puerto Rico.

“President Trump and the entire HUD family stand with our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico to help them recover from these devastating hurricanes,” said HUD Secretary Ben Carson. “These recovery funds will help repair damaged homes and businesses. As local leaders, along with their citizens, develop their recovery plans, HUD will reduce regulatory barriers and remove any unnecessary roadblocks to speed long-term recovery.”

Governor Rosselló added, "On behalf of the many thousands of survivors here in Puerto Rico, I want to express our appreciation to the Administration and HUD for recognizing the tremendous needs that remain in so many of our neighborhoods. This grant will make a huge difference in repairing damaged homes and businesses and facilitating the social and economic recovery here in the island.”

Congresswoman Jenniffer González-Colón said, “The \$1.5 billion in CDBG-DR funding that we are announcing originates from the first Continuing Resolution (CR) that we advocated for and approved in Congress last September, out of a total of \$7.4 billion that was assigned to HUD to assist in the aftermath of natural disasters. Today's announcement is just another example of our ongoing efforts in Congress to allocate federal funding that helps mitigate the hurricanes' disastrous effects and consequences.”

## Background

On September 8, 2017, President Trump signed the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2018 and the Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Requirements Act, 2017. The Act appropriated \$7.4 billion in CDBG-DR funding for major disasters declared in calendar year 2017. To distribute these funds, the Act requires HUD to direct the funds to the areas most impacted by qualifying disasters. HUD will continue to work with Puerto Rico to address its remaining unmet needs.

In making today's allocation to Puerto Rico, HUD relied upon data from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) to determine the extent of unmet housing and small business needs in the areas most impacted by the disasters. HUD's analysis found thousands of middle- and lower income homeowners and renters experienced serious damage to their residences and who were not adequately insured (or uninsured) for their losses. Similarly, businesses suffered serious damage that is not adequately covered by insurance or other resources. The grant announced today is designed to help meet needs not being met by private insurance or other sources of federal assistance.

CDBG-DR grants support a variety of disaster recovery activities including housing redevelopment and rebuilding, business assistance, economic revitalization, and infrastructure repair. Grantees are required to spend the majority of these recovery funds in "most impacted" areas as identified by HUD. HUD will issue administrative guidelines shortly for use of the funds to address grantees' long-term recovery needs, particularly in the area of housing recovery.

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