

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 14, 2026

The Honorable Jenniffer González-Colón
Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
La Fortaleza, San Juan, Puerto Rico

Dear Governor González-Colón:

We write to urge you to request a major disaster declaration from President Trump without further delay and to request that the Administration make available all categories of Public Assistance, Individual Assistance, and Direct Federal Assistance to municipalities across Puerto Rico affected by the extreme drought and ongoing 48-hour rotating water rationing. Under 42 U.S.C. § 5170 (a), only the Governor must submit that request.¹

Over the past year and a half, the Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority's (PRASA) has experienced several service interruptions across the island that have left hundreds of thousands of people without water. Last summer, Puerto Rico activated its National Guard after a 54-inch diameter pipe that serves the Sergio Cuevas filtration plant in Trujillo Alto ruptured, which left 183,000 customers without water at its peak.² Just three months later, a major water main rupture cut service to more than 165,000 customers across 15 municipalities and forced more than 270 schools to modify their schedules.³ In March of this year, a power outage at the Carraízo dam knocked three of the facility's main pumps offline, cutting water service entirely or reducing it to dangerously low pressure for thousands of residents across the metropolitan area.⁴ Recent reports have also indicated that PRASA loses approximately 60 percent of the water it produces.⁵

On Friday, August 7, 2026, PRASA implemented new water rationing measures, cutting service for rotating 48-hour periods in parts of San Juan and surrounding areas to over 180,000 households, with no indication of when the measures will end.⁶ PRASA's persistent failure to provide reliable water service to the people of Puerto Rico compounded by the extreme drought and water shortages affecting thousands across the island, has created a water crisis that requires federal assistance to help families recover.⁷

Therefore, we urge you to expeditiously request a major disaster declaration from President Trump and request that the Administration make available all categories of Public Assistance, Individual Assistance, and Direct Federal Assistance to all municipalities impacted by Puerto Rico's ongoing water crisis. The people of Puerto Rico cannot afford further delays.

¹ Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5170 (a) (2018).

² Néstor Rosa-Marbrell, "Falta De Agua Potable Provoca Una Gran Crisis En Puerto Rico," *Noticias Prensa Latina - Actualizando minuto a minuto*, July 29, 2025, <https://www.prensa-latina.cu/2025/07/29/falta-de-agua-potable-provoca-una-gran-crisis-en-puerto-rico/>.

³ "Puerto Rico Schools Amend Schedule After Key Water Pipe Breaks," *AP News*, October 21, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/puerto-rico-water-shortage-aaa-c18f9b03c2fe3e1146d166f3c5521d1c>.

⁴ "Thousands Could Be Left Without Water or With Low Pressure After Power Outage Affects Carraízo," *El Nuevo Día*, March 27, 2026, <https://www.elnuevodia.com/english/news/story/thousands-could-be-left-without-water-or-with-low-pressure-after-power-outage-affects-carraizo/>.

⁵ "Carl Axel Soderberg: 'Acueductos pierde el 60% del agua que produce,'" video, *El Nuevo Día*, 1 de agosto de 2026, <https://www.elnuevodia.com/noticias/locales/videos/carl-axel-soderberg-acueductos-pierde-el-60-del-agua-que-produce-294132/>.

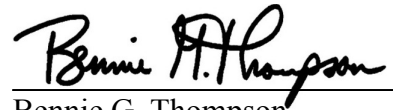
⁶ Ian Aikman, "Puerto Rico Rations Water Supplies Due to Intense Drought," *BBC News*, August 9, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cqlxgk7r2vwo>.

⁷ Julian Atienza, "El Niño Intensifies Puerto Rico's Record Drought and Water Crisis as Water Rationing Begins," *FOX Weather*, August 7, 2026, <https://www.foxweather.com/weather-news/el-nino-intensifying-puerto-rico-drought-water-crisis-rationing>.

Sincerely,



Pablo José Hernández
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



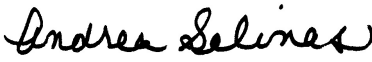
Ruben Gallego
United States Senator



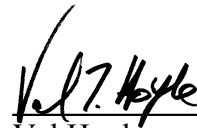
Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



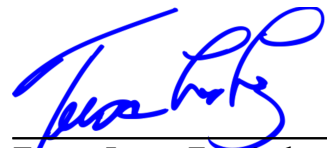
Andrea Salinas
Member of Congress



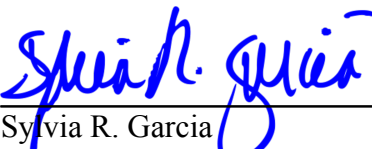
Val Hoyle
Member of Congress



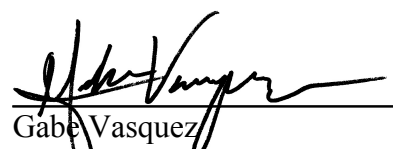
Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



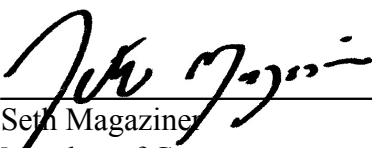
Teresa Leger Fernandez
Member of Congress



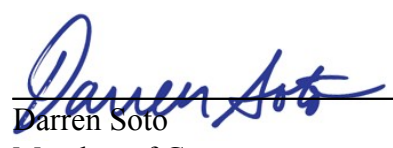
Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Gabe Vasquez
Member of Congress



Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



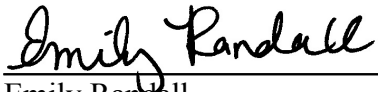
Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



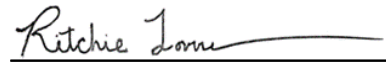
Emily Randall
Member of Congress



Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



Nellie Pou
Member of Congress



Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress



Julie Johnson
Member of Congress



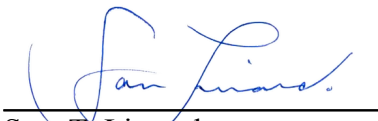
Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



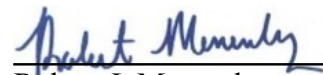
Luz M. Rivas
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Sam T. Liccardo
Member of Congress



Robert J. Menendez
Member of Congress