

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 5, 2020

The Honorable Pete T. Gaynor
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Administrator Gaynor:

We write in strong support of the Government of Puerto Rico's request to extend the incident period for the already granted major disaster declaration in response to the 6.4-magnitude earthquake on January 7, DR-4473, to include the aftershocks that occurred this past weekend.

Back in January, a 6.4-magnitude earthquake rippled across the southern portion of Puerto Rico and resulted in eight landslides, over 2,000 individuals in shelters – including 125 minors, and a massive loss of electricity for island residents. The earthquake tragically claimed the life of a 73-year-old man in the southern city of Ponce and many more were injured. The Costa Sur power generation plant – the largest on Puerto Rico's grid – sustained damage so severe that the Island will need 500 megawatts of emergency generation for the rest of the year. In response, Governor Wanda Vázquez Garced requested a major disaster declaration on January 11, 2020, pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (P.L. 93-288) and this was granted on January 15. The original incident period was defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) starting December 28, 2019 through February 4, 2020.

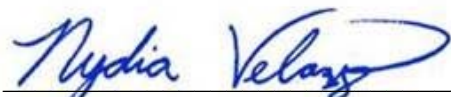
In the months following this major earthquake, Puerto Rico has been hit by a number of smaller aftershocks. This past Saturday, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) announced there had been a 5.4-magnitude earthquake that struck around 7:15 AM local time near Tallaboa, about 80 miles southwest of the capital of San Juan. Governor Vázquez Garced said 50 families were forced from their homes but that they are not being housed in shelters due to fears over coronavirus. While the damage is still being assessed, the USGS's announcement connects this incident to the aforementioned 6.4-magnitude earthquake as an aftershock. Therefore, we urge FEMA to extend the incident period for DR-4473 to include these more recent quakes off the coast of Puerto Rico.

We appreciate your swift attention and consideration of this request and stand ready to work with FEMA to deliver support and resources to the impacted communities.

Sincerely,




Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

/s/Chris Van Hollen

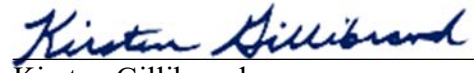
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



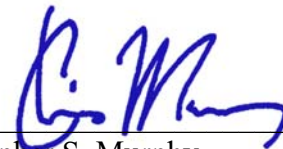
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



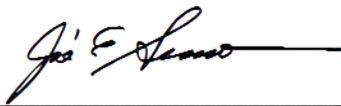
Patty Murray
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



José E. Serrano
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



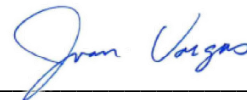
Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



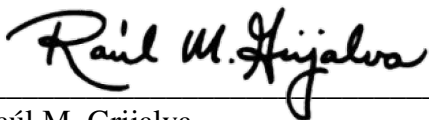
Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress