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NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

Senator Rivera on Trump Administration's Threat To Cut Federal Relief Funds for Puerto Rico

GUSTAVO RIVERA November 13, 2018

| ISSUE: **PUERTO RICO, HURRICANE MARIA, TRUMP ADMINISTRATION, FEDERAL FUNDING CUTS**

"While not surprised, I'm enraged that the Trump administration is taking into consideration cutting critical federal relief funds for Puerto Rico claiming, without any evidence, that the island's government is using federal disaster relief money to pay off its debt. It has only been a year since Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico, killing over 3,000 American citizens while leaving a path of destruction that has fundamentally changed the quality of life of the 3.5 million Puerto Ricans left on the island.

For months, we have painfully witnessed how the federal government has continuously failed and stalled the recovery efforts in the island. Just over a year into Puerto Rico's long road to recovery and many Puerto Ricans still cannot count on reliable water, electricity or shelter. Thousands of Puerto Ricans, especially children, seniors, and the sick, are still struggling with schools, hospitals, and an overall infrastructure that is on the brink of collapse. That is why, if approved by Congress, these funding cuts would without a doubt condemn Puerto Rico to its financial demise with little to no hope of a real recovery.

We need to call on our Congressional leaders to fight back against any attempt by the Trump administration to exclude adequate disaster relief funding for Puerto Rico in a future

spending bill. After my third visit to the island last week, I was once again humbled and inspired by the resilience and resolution of the Puerto Rican people. However, without receiving adequate federal funding, the island's highly complex challenges could ultimately outweigh the sheer will and determination of Puerto Ricans, and we cannot accept that."