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Congress of the United States
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September 24, 2008

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

As you may know, over the past week Puerto Rico was pounded with more than 30 inches of rain in less than 48 hours as a result of a slow-moving tropical wave stationed over the Island. The impact has been devastating, with considerable damage to infrastructure, private property, businesses and the economy. As it currently stands, 17 shelters are providing services to dislocated residents, schools have been closed indefinitely, and 47 main roads have been closed due to flooding or landslides. In addition, several residents on the Island do not currently have access to electricity or water and it is unclear when these essential services will be restored. Devastation has been particularly grave in the Southern part of the Island, where our mayors are urgently asking for assistance as first responders in this natural disaster. Puerto Rico's agricultural sector has been particularly impacted and may have lost as much as \$ 24 million in crops such as coffee and bananas due to the storm.

It is my understanding that the Governor of Puerto Rico has already submitted a petition requesting a major disaster area declaration. If this is the case, I would urge you to declare Puerto Rico a major disaster area as soon as possible and to expedite any disaster aid that is available to the American citizens of Puerto Rico in the affected areas as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration of my request. I look forward to working with you to ensure that essential disaster relief reaches the individuals on the Island.

Sincerely,

Luis G. Fortuño
Member of Congress