Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

NYDIA M. VELAZQUEZ
7TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

October 6, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you know, on September 28th, eight days after Puerto Rico was hit by the worst storm to make landfall on the island in nearly a century, your Administration agreed to waive the Jones Act for a ten-day period. On Sunday, this waiver will expire, yet significant numbers of Puerto Ricans remain displaced and still lack food, drinking water and electricity. With the long road to recovery just beginning, I am asking that the Jones Act waiver for Puerto Rico be extended.

The Jones Act artificially drives up the costs of supplies delivered to Puerto Rico. If the Jones Act is reinstated, building supplies will cost significantly more in Puerto Rico, compared to costs on the mainland. This will serve only to slow Puerto Rico's long term recovery and, further, make the taxpayer pay more to finance reconstruction efforts. Moreover, waiving the Act will make other goods more affordable, stimulating local economic activity at exactly the time Puerto Rico most needs it.

As you may be aware, there are bicameral and bipartisan legislative efforts underway to waive the Jones Act for longer periods of time. Unfortunately, the people of Puerto Rico cannot afford to wait for those measures to make their way through the legislative process. I therefore ask you to immediately extend the Jones Act waiver for Puerto Rico for one year, at minimum.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nydia M. Velázquez