

JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN
PUERTO RICO, AT LARGE

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1609 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
(202) 225-6215 FAX: (202) 225-2154

SAN JUAN OFFICE:
157 AVENIDA DE LA CONSTITUCIÓN
ANTIGUO EDIFICIO DE MEDICINA TROPICAL
SEGUNDO PISO
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO 00901
(787) 723-6333 FAX: (787) 729-7738



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-5400

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March 21, 2020

The Honorable Peter Gaynor
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Administrator Gaynor:

The COVID-19 pandemic is taxing heavily the availability of supplies and materials for conducting the necessary testing, providing Personal Protective Equipment to caregivers, and deploying the medical devices and supplies necessary for diagnosis, isolation and treatment.

Given the global scale of the effort to stop this scourge, it is imperative that all U.S. jurisdictions be relieved from the Stafford Act “Buy American” provisions. I hereby request that entities receiving or using federal funding in Puerto Rico for the purpose of fighting the COVID-19 public health emergency be immediately and fully relieved from the “Buy American” provisions of the Stafford Act (42 USC 5206).

Exception for purposes of public interest or lack of immediate availability is already contemplated under the Buy American Act and under the regulations. Puerto Rico’s geographic location, which complicates shipment and delivery of supplies, requires that we be able to get these lifesaving materials promptly from the best available source, so our health care sector can step up according to the President’s directives.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenniffer Gonzalez-Colon".

Jenniffer González-Colón
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Peter DeFazio, Chairman, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
The Honorable Sam Graves, Ranking Member, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure