

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY

## LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR SHEILA OLIVER AND GOVERNOR RICARDO ROSSELLÓ ANNOUNCE RELEASE OF PUERTO RICO RELIEF COMMISSION REPORT

**NEWARK** - Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver today announced that the New Jersey Commission on Puerto Rico Relief's report has been released and is now available to the public, outlining recommendations for New Jersey's ongoing effort to assist the over 30,000 displaced Puerto Ricans who remain in the state following Hurricane Maria. The report, which was mandated by Governor Phil Murphy's Executive Order 10, also details ways that the state can help the island and the Americans who live there.

"It is unacceptable that eight months after Hurricane Maria's landfall, so many of our fellow Americans are still lacking access to electricity and safe water," **Governor Murphy said**. "We are committed to helping those who came to New Jersey, those who remain in Puerto Rico, and those who wish to return to the island. I look forward to reviewing the recommendations and continuing to assist Puerto Ricans both in our state and on the island."

"We would like to thank Governor Murphy and the Commission for all the services designed towards the Puerto Rican community that sought refuge in New Jersey after Hurricane Maria hit the Island," **said Governor Rosselló**. "The category five winds devastated not only our electrical infrastructure but the homes of thousands of Puerto Ricans. Thanks to the solidarity of Governor Murphy and the community in New Jersey, many Puerto Ricans were able to move to a safe place to ensure the welfare of children, the elderly, and the sick. Our commitment is that Puerto Ricans can gradually return to our Island and those who wish to stay in other jurisdictions can have an orderly transition after the emergency caused by the hurricane in Puerto Rico."

On Monday, February 12, 2018, Governor Murphy signed Executive Order 10, which established an 18-member commission (16 from New Jersey and 2 from Puerto Rico) tasked with collaborating with state and federal agencies to expedite aid for Puerto Ricans impacted by Hurricane Maria. The order required the Commission to issue a report outlining its findings within 90 days. Since the Commission was established, it has helped achieve the following:

- Donation of the State's Sandy Integrated Recovery Operations and Management System (SIROMS) to Puerto Rico – an IT platform allowing the state to deploy and monitor services after a natural disaster – for use during future storms;
- Communication with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to secure a moratorium extension for people owning properties on Puerto Rico that are now facing foreclosure;
- Conducting energy strategy sessions between PSEG and Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA) to improve the island's aging energy infrastructure.

Additional recommendations outlined in the report include:

- The creation of one-stop service centers where evacuees can collect resources provided by all departments and agencies;
- Translation and interpreter services at relevant departments and agencies;
- Bilingual service guides distributed throughout the community;
- Creation of new grant programs targeted toward English language learning for workplace success;
- The creation of new partnerships between New Jersey state departments with agencies and companies in Puerto Rico;
- The creation of a strategic partnership with Puerto Rico's Department of Education to allow New Jersey schools to accept students without education records and waive application fees for educator certificates.

The Governor's office will carefully review all proposed recommendations to determine the best courses of action for the state to help Puerto Rican evacuees in New Jersey and assist recovery efforts on the island.

The report PDF is available here. ([https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A\\_\\_te2ma.net\\_click\\_3zesu\\_nrddit\\_zgtbbf&d=DwMFaQ&c=4BTEw-1msHjOY4ITcFLmDM6JB8x6ZgbU2J24IH0HZLU&r=xF3DPDNEH8rwpTwktOjb4MHQ0EgF6v3M0zt3hszQvyU&m=SQ3Po4ONsluFwFwP8Ov92k4C7fFSCTEeK29AGPRzYFQ&sOWb8RcY3p5NkRBzY&e=](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__te2ma.net_click_3zesu_nrddit_zgtbbf&d=DwMFaQ&c=4BTEw-1msHjOY4ITcFLmDM6JB8x6ZgbU2J24IH0HZLU&r=xF3DPDNEH8rwpTwktOjb4MHQ0EgF6v3M0zt3hszQvyU&m=SQ3Po4ONsluFwFwP8Ov92k4C7fFSCTEeK29AGPRzYFQ&sOWb8RcY3p5NkRBzY&e=))

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