

## Office of the Governor

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### NEWS RELEASE

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#### **Governor Whitman Offers State Assistance to Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands in Aftermath of Hurricane Georges**

Gov. Christie Whitman today reached out to the Governors of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands in an effort to offer assistance to these territories as they recover from the effects of Hurricane Georges.

Gov. Whitman, who is in Mexico leading a trade mission, sent letters to both the Governor of Puerto Rico, Pedro Rosello, and the Governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Roy L. Schneider. Gov. Whitman also contacted Lynn Canton, Director of FEMA Region II, who is in San Juan, Puerto Rico overseeing relief efforts.

"Many New Jerseyans have strong ties to the people of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands - friends, family and a shared culture and history," said Governor Whitman. "I have notified Gov. Rosello and Gov. Schneider that New Jersey emergency personnel and the New Jersey National Guard stand ready to assist them in their efforts to recover from this terrible disaster."

Hurricane Georges is expected to bring torrential rains of up to 24 inches to the two territories in just two days. The record-breaking rainfall and severe flooding are expected to result in damages to roads and bridges, homes and businesses, leaving many residents homeless.

"New Jerseyans have a history of being generous and ready to lend a helping hand," said the Governor. "The best way to help is to contact a major relief organization -- such as the Red Cross - where making a donation can make a real difference."

Donations can be made to either the local Red Cross or the the National Headquarters: Disaster Relief, American Red Cross, PO Box 37243, Washington, DC 20013, or by calling the Red Cross at 1-800-HELP-NOW (1-800-435-7669). A Spanish-language hotline is available at 1-800-257-7575.