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October 3, 2017

Majority Leader Mitch McConnell
United States Senate
S-230 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

Speaker Paul Ryan
United States House of Representatives
H-232 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Minority Leader Chuck Schumer
United States Senate
419 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi
United States House of Representatives
H-204 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and
Minority Leader Pelosi:

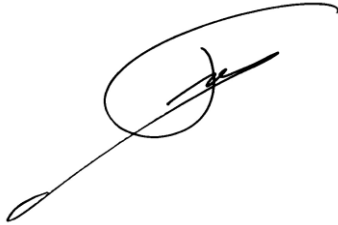
On behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a non-profit professional organization of more than 66,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults, I write to urge you to act swiftly to enact emergency supplemental funding for the humanitarian crisis occurring in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands due to Hurricanes Maria and Irma. It has been thirteen days since Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico and over three weeks since Irma hit the Virgin Islands, yet Congress has not acted.

Though the situation in Puerto Rico and in the U.S. Virgin Islands is rapidly evolving, the aftermath of the hurricanes is causing a humanitarian crisis that we fear will disproportionately harm vulnerable infants, children, and their families. Countless Puerto Ricans and Virgin Islanders lack power, fuel, clean water, food, and access to clinicians and hospitals. Many hospitals on the islands are closed or damaged, and the lack of power threatens the effectiveness of important medicines like insulin and vaccines, which need to be refrigerated and kept cool. Additionally, basic medical supplies like antibiotics, gauze, alcohol swabs, and sterile water are scarce.

It is imperative that Congress pass emergency supplemental funding to address this crisis immediately. The longer the Congress waits to act, the more dire this situation will become. Infants, children, and adolescents are particularly vulnerable in disasters, and it is critical that we address their needs as soon as possible. Though first responders and relief organizations on the ground are doing all that they can, the needs of the people are greater than what they can provide without additional assistance. After responding to the devastating hurricanes in both Texas and Florida, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been stretched to its limit, and requires additional resources.

The AAP urges Congress to take immediate action and pass legislation that provides funding for the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. If the AAP can be of any further assistance, please contact Patrick Johnson in our Washington, D.C. office at 202/347-8600 or pjohnson@aap.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'F' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

Fernando Stein, MD, FAAP
President

FS/arp

cc: The Honorable Thad Cochran, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Nita M. Lowey, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee