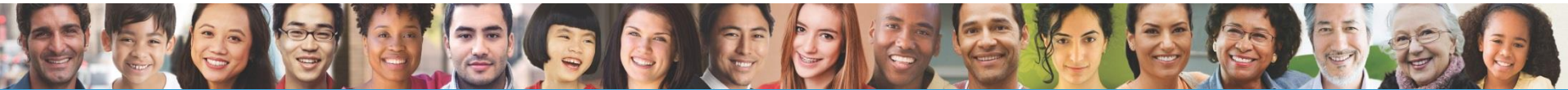




# Puerto Rico and USVI Federal Healthcare Advocacy Agenda

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# Health Care Funding in Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands: Baseline structural problems

- Health care funding in US Territories was in profound crisis before Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria.
- Intensive discussions of what Executive Branch could do in 2015 and 2016. Primary conclusion was that legislative action is needed.
- Core problems are:
  - Capped structure to Medicaid funding
  - Federal match that is lower than most other states despite lower incomes in territories.
  - This problem THEN made worse by loss of temporary cap increase for Medicaid expansion.
- All of this means that territories had less than zero capacity to take on health care costs of natural disasters.

# DC Based Advocacy for Congressional Action

Various national Latino and health care organizations have been coordinating on advocacy for Congress to act on crisis.

- December 18<sup>th</sup> sign-on letter to Congressional leaders.
  - Signed by Families USA and 125 community, provider, labor, and patient organizations
- Letter asks Congress to:
  1. Temporarily increase PR and USVI federal Medicaid matching rate to 100 percent. (Katrina precedent)
  2. Provide 100% Medicaid match for evacuees to other states (Katrina precedent)
  3. Medicaid eligibility simplification (Katrina and 9/11 precedent)
    - Attestation-based Medicaid Eligibility
    - Simplified applications and delayed redeterminations (also 2014 precedent!)
  4. Funding for health care reconstruction

# Current Status

- Continuing Resolution failed to include Puerto Rico and VI healthcare relief
- Looking toward supplemental bill
- House bill limited on four Medicaid asks
- Remember—these proposals only provide modest temporary relief for a structurally unsound and unfair Medicaid financing system.
- Long-term, sustainable fix requires full Medicaid and Medicare parity for the 3.5 million American citizens living in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.



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