



City of Chicago



R2020-83

Office of the City Clerk

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Meeting Date: 1/15/2020

Sponsor(s): Lightfoot (Mayor)

Type: Resolution

Title: Support extended to people of Puerto Rico on rebuilding after earthquakes

Committee(s) Assignment:

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

LORI E. LIGHTFOOT
MAYOR

January 15, 2020

TO THE HONORABLE, THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I transmit herewith a resolution expressing solidarity with Puerto Rican earthquake victims.

Your favorable consideration of this resolution will be appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Lori E. Lightfoot
Mayor

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Since the end of December 2019, Puerto Rico has been devastated by hundreds of earthquakes that have caused businesses and cultural landmarks to crumble, forced thousands to flee from their homes, and left millions without power; and

WHEREAS, Puerto Rico is still reeling from the devastation wrought by Hurricanes Irma and Maria, the deadly storms that battered the Island over two weeks in September 2017; and

WHEREAS, Following a magnitude 4.7 earthquake on December 28, 2019, the Island has been repeatedly rocked by aftershocks and earthquakes, more than 500 of which have been of a magnitude of 2.0 or greater, and 30 of which have been at a magnitude of more than 4.0; and

WHEREAS, On Tuesday, January 7, 2020, the strongest earthquake in Puerto Rico in more than a century struck near Guayanilla on the Island's southwest coast. This powerful earthquake killed one person and injured several others; and

WHEREAS, On Saturday, after days of strong tremors, a magnitude 5.9 earthquake rocked the Island, causing landslides in the town of Peñuelas, and further frightening residents who were still recovering from the Tuesday earthquake; and

WHEREAS, Saturday's earthquake was followed on Monday by a magnitude 5.8 earthquake that leveled several homes along Puerto Rico's southwest coast, and on Tuesday by dozens of smaller earthquakes within a few miles of each other; and

WHEREAS, More than 1,200 tremors of varying magnitude have shaken this vulnerable region over the last three weeks. Thousands of people across several towns are sleeping in tents or under tarps, or out in the open, with no sense of when these terrifying quakes will stop. The Associated Press estimates the number of people left homeless by this series of quakes at nearly 5,000; and

WHEREAS, The residents of Guayanilla, Guánica, Yauco and Ponce have been hardest hit. In five of the six most affected municipalities, preliminary damage estimates total over \$460 million, and the United States Geological Survey has warned that residents of Puerto Rico should prepare for more aftershocks in the coming days, and has not ruled out the possibility that another earthquake of 6.4 magnitude or higher could hit the Island; and

WHEREAS, Puerto Ricans continue to live in terror of when the next earthquake will strike, causing more injury, loss of life, and damage to homes and fragile infrastructure that has yet to fully recover from the last three years' of devastation; and

WHEREAS, The devastation sustained by Puerto Rico has touched Chicagoans in a particularly strong and heartfelt way. Chicago's over 100,000 residents of Puerto Rican descent contribute greatly to the City's vibrancy and celebrate their culture, particularly along the Paseo Boricua, which is the only officially recognized Puerto Rican neighborhood in the Country; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this fifteenth day of January, 2020, express our condolences to the people of Puerto Rico who have endured these devastating earthquakes, commend the resiliency and

courage of the people who keep rebuilding their Island, and offer our hopes and prayers in support of the communities that have been recently devastated; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the City of Chicago is directed to deliver a suitable copy of this resolution to the Honorable Wanda Vázquez Garced, Governor of Puerto Rico, as a sign of our empathy and good wishes.