




September 26, 2017

TO: Mayor Teresa Jacobs
-AND-
Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Ajit M. Lalchandani, County Administrator 

SUBJECT: Open Discussion
DISCUSSION AGENDA ITEM OCTOBER 3, 2017

The following item has been submitted for open discussion at the October 3, 2017 Board meeting:

- District 5 – Assistance for Puerto Rican citizens impacted by Hurricane Maria

The memo related to this item is attached.

AML/mf

Attachment

DATE: September 22, 2017
TO: Ajit Lalchandani, County Administrator
CC: Cheryl Gillepsie, Agenda Development
FROM: Emily Bonilla, Commissioner, District 5 *ef*
SUBJECT: Request to add Discussion Item at BCC Meeting on October 3, 2017

Commissioner Bonilla would like to thank the Mayor for her many prayers for our fellow Americans who live on the island of Puerto Rico in regards to their hardships due to Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Commissioner Bonilla and her husband are of Puerto Rican descent and have many family and friends in Puerto Rico who they still have not had any contact with after Hurricane Maria hit the island. Many Orange County residents are in the same situation.

There are hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans living in the Central Florida region. Traditionally, Puerto Ricans are very family oriented and will be more than happy and will insist on taking in family members who are having hardships. Therefore, Orange County is possibly looking at a large migration of Puerto Ricans over the next couple of months – possibly over 100,000.

Commissioner Bonilla is in contact with Congressman Soto's office with what federal assistance can help those migrating to the main land from Puerto Rico. She is working to connect with many nonprofits and businesses to send much needed hurricane relief assistance to Puerto Rico. However, she would also like to have a discussion with the Board of County Commissioners regarding assistance to those who may migrate to Orange County due to the hurricanes and who will be considered homeless and need help adjusting to a new way of life in our county.

Commissioner Bonilla is offering to work with the Mayor in organizing a temporary Advisory Board of community organizations, houses of worship and other community leaders that have a reach into the Puerto Rican community to serve the unique needs of fellow US citizens of Puerto Rico migrating to Orange County.