

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9744

To require a study on the critical data gaps experienced by Federal agencies providing grants for the recovery of Puerto Rico.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 20, 2024

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. ADAMS, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Mr. TORRES of New York, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mr. GRIJALVA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To require a study on the critical data gaps experienced by Federal agencies providing grants for the recovery of Puerto Rico.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Data Improvement for
5 Puerto Rico Recovery Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. STUDY REQUIRED.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
8 date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
9 shall complete and submit to the appropriate congressional

1 committees a report containing the results of a study on
2 the specific data needs across grant-awarding agencies.
3 The report shall contain the following:

4 (1) A list of all grants provided by grant-award-
5 ing agencies to support Puerto Rico's recovery from
6 Hurricanes Irma, María, and Fiona, the 2020 earth-
7 quakes, and the COVID-19 pandemic. The list shall
8 specify the grant type, amount, and the specific dis-
9 aster or emergency to which it pertains.

10 (2) An assessment of statistical products that
11 details the stages of the grant process at which sta-
12 tistical products were used, including—

- 13 (A) notice of funding opportunity;
14 (B) development;
15 (C) application review;
16 (D) award selection;
17 (E) formulation of terms and conditions;

18 and

- 19 (F) technical assistance.

20 (3) An evaluation of the most critical data
21 needs identified by grant-awarding agencies in man-
22 aging disaster-related grants for Puerto Rico, includ-
23 ing issues related to lack of data coverage, dispari-
24 ties, reporting delays, and limitations in data reli-
25 ability.

1 (4) A description of the extent to which the
2 identified data gaps have impeded effective grant al-
3 location, management, and evaluation for Puerto
4 Rico, including any specific examples where grant
5 execution was hindered.

6 (5) Where applicable, a list of Federal products
7 that currently exclude Puerto Rico, but which could
8 improve grant processes if the Puerto Rico was in-
9 cluded. The grant-awarding agencies shall provide
10 recommendations on integrating Puerto Rico into
11 such Federal products to enhance grant allocation
12 and oversight.

13 (b) ACCESS TO PROMPT AND COMPLETE INFORMA-
14 TION.—Any Federal official from whom the Comptroller
15 General seeks information for purposes of the report re-
16 quired by subsection (a) shall comprehensively respond to
17 such request for information, not later than 90 days after
18 the receipt of that request.

19 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

20 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
21 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
22 mittees” means—

23 (A) the Committee on National Resources
24 of the House of Representatives; and

1 (B) the Committee on Energy and Natural
2 Resources of the Senate.

3 (2) GRANT-AWARDING AGENCIES.—The term
4 “grant-awarding agencies” means relevant agencies
5 what have allocated, obligated, or disbursed recovery
6 funds for Puerto Rico.

7 (3) RELEVANT AGENCIES.—The term “relevant
8 agencies” means the following:

9 (A) Environmental Protection Agency.

10 (B) Federal Communications Commission.

11 (C) Federal Emergency Management
12 Agency.

13 (D) General Services Administration.

14 (E) National Science Foundation.

15 (F) Small Business Administration.

16 (G) Army Corps of Engineers.

17 (H) Department of Agriculture.

18 (I) Department of Commerce, including
19 the Economic Development Administration, Mi-
20 nority Business Development Agency.

21 (J) National Telecommunications and In-
22 formation Administration.

23 (K) National Institute of Standards and
24 Technology.

25 (L) International Trade Administration.

1 (M) National Oceanic and Atmospheric
2 Administration.

3 (N) Department of Energy.

4 (O) Department of Health and Human
5 Services.

6 (P) Department of Homeland Security.

7 (Q) Department of Housing and Urban
8 Development.

9 (R) Department of Justice.

10 (S) Department of Labor.

11 (T) Department of the Interior.

12 (U) Department of Transportation.

13 (V) Department of Veterans Affairs.

14 (4) STATISTICAL PRODUCTS.—The term “sta-
15 tistical products” means Federal statistical inputs,
16 estimates, and products used by grant-awarding
17 agencies to develop and manage grant funding.

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