

Duckworth calls on disaster response agencies to improve coordinated relief efforts

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WASHINGTON, DC — U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) highlighted the need for better coordination between disaster response agencies to ensure communities and businesses— including those in rural areas – affected by natural disasters have access to the resources and aid they need to recover. Duckworth also stressed the need for disaster relief in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, which are home to more than 3.5 million U.S. citizens, to help them recover from the devastation caused by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria. Video of Duckworth’s remarks during the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship hearing is available [here](#).



“When a natural disaster strikes, those affected deserve access to relief resources and affordable emergency loans as soon as possible,” said Duckworth. “Yet, far too many

Americans affected by extreme weather— both in Illinois and in Puerto Rico – struggle to access the information they need to make a decision about which federal recovery program will best fit the needs of their community. That’s unacceptable. Now it is time for Congress to act to make sure that those devastated by a natural disaster don’t have to struggle to access appropriate recovery programs and the corresponding federal agencies have the resources they need to help disaster-torn communities recover and rebuild.”

Illinois has the 7th largest population of Puerto Ricans in the United States. The Illinois Guard trains with the Puerto Rican Guard on a regular basis and recently deployed a team to provide telecommunication assistance, food, water, tents and cots to Puerto Rico. Earlier this week, Duckworth joined 10 of her colleagues in writing a [letter](#) to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Speaker of the House of Representatives Paul Ryan urging them to take immediate action on disaster relief legislation for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Small Business Administration (SBA), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) all offer recovery programs for American communities devastated by natural disasters.