

**From:** "Congresswoman Stacey E. Plaskett" <newsletter.plaskett@mail.house.gov>

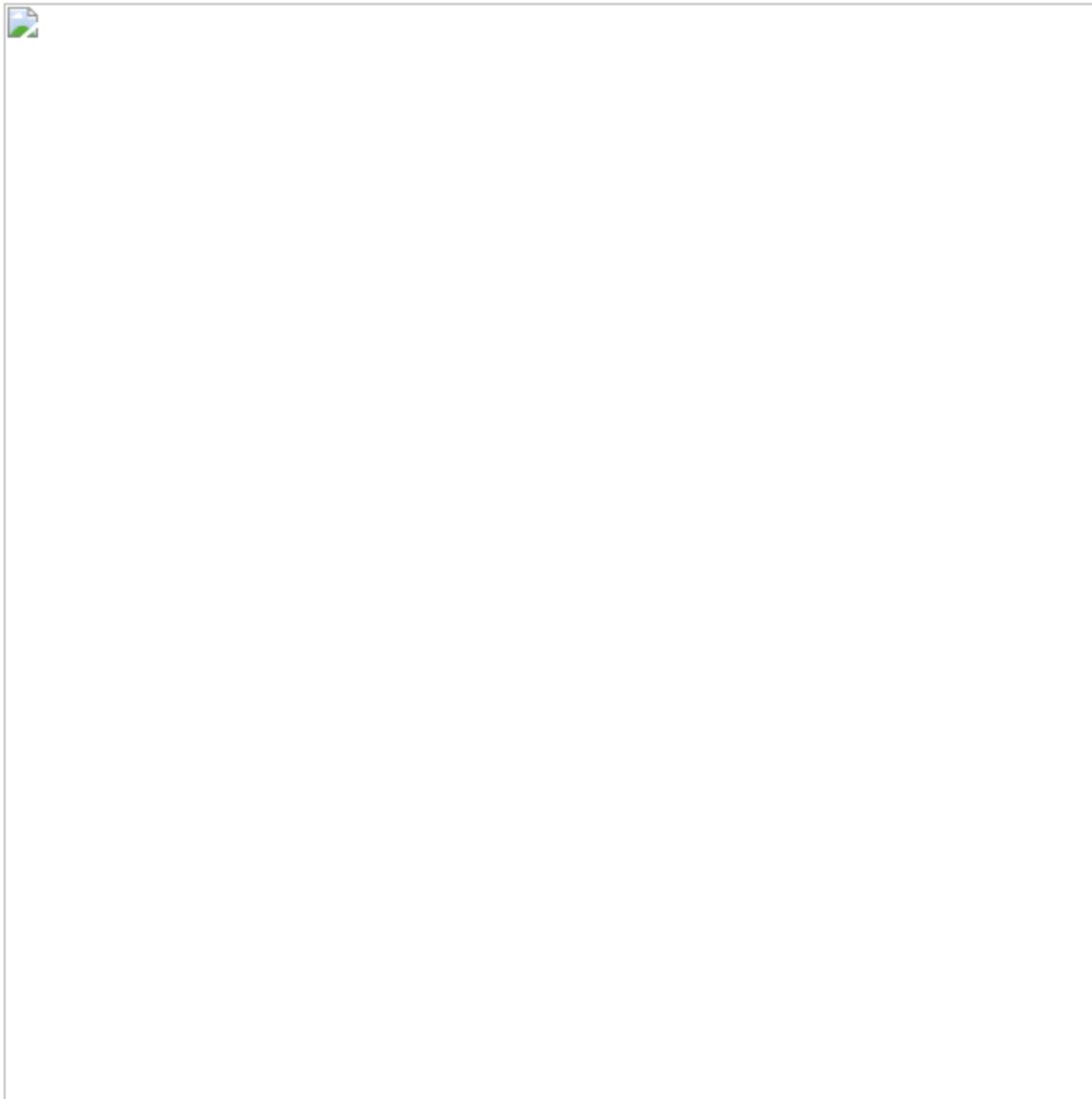
**To:** jeevacation@gmail.com

**Subject:** Important Hurricane Irma Update from Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett

**Date:** Sat, 09 Sep 2017 00:59:48 +0000

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Greetings Virgin Islanders:

Hurricane Irma was a historic storm of incredible magnitude that has ravaged islands of

the Caribbean including our Virgin Islands. People have lost their homes, vehicles, important personal possessions as well as businesses that can never be replaced. Many areas of our Virgin Islands have been decimated and are in great need of help.

I just wanted to give you an update on what I have been doing here in Washington, DC. Today, the US House of Representatives passed a disaster aid package that includes \$7.4 billion for disaster relief for FEMA, \$7.4 billion in emergency funds for Community Development Block Grants and \$450 million for the Small Business Administration disaster loan program. The President signed this bill into law in this afternoon.

Here are some of the highlights of the package voted on today:

H.R.601 as amended makes available \$15.25 billion in supplemental funding for emergency costs of responding to natural disasters including Hurricane Irma.

**FEMA funding:**

\$15.25 billion total supplemental includes \$7.4 billion (available until expended) to replenish a general disaster fund that is distributed at the discretion of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in responding to major disasters declared by the President. This applies to damage caused by Hurricane Irma to the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. The \$7.4 billion contribution to the Disaster Relief Fund will support FEMA's direct assistance to individuals, emergency protective measures, debris removal, and response activities performed by other federal personnel as assigned by FEMA.

**HUD funding:**

The supplemental also provides \$7.4 billion of additional funds to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant Program for hurricane response and recovery. This funding is to be awarded directly to state and local governments and must be used for disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, and economic revitalization in the most impacted and distressed areas including the U.S. Virgin Islands. State and local governments may use 5% of the funding they receive for administrative costs.

**SBA funding:**

Finally, the supplemental makes available another \$450 million for financial assistance under the Small Business Administration's (SBA) disaster loan program to provide small businesses and homeowners with home disaster loans, business physical disaster loans, economic injury disaster loans, and additional mitigation loans. Of this \$450 million amount, \$225 million may be used for SBA administrative expenses to carry out the disaster loan program.

I am grateful to Governor Mapp and his administration, especially VITEMA Director Mona Barnes, for the work thus far and the Governor's request for the Expedited Major Disaster Declaration which was signed by the President yesterday. In the days to come I will be sending to the President and FEMA, specific requests to include request of reimbursements and support immediately for the Army Corps of Engineers and other facilities of FEMA among other things.

Right now, thousands of people are reeling with trauma from of the most catastrophic storms ever to strike the Caribbean region. Hurricane Irma has toppled buildings and leveled many homes. Making the Virgin Islands whole will require a massive and coordinated effort spanning the course of many months, and indeed years. I will continue to meet with local and federal officials to determine the amount of support needed to facilitate the rebuilding of the Virgin Island.

Also, the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI) has started the FUND FOR THE VIRGIN ISLANDS. The purpose of this fund is to provide monies for critical needs in the Virgin Islands. Please make donations through PayPal using the following the link:

<http://cfvi.net/donate/donate-fund.php>. Please add "Fund for the VI" or "FFVI" into the description/memo line. Once the office is back in running order, donations will be accepted in the form of a check, cash and over the telephone are also an option.



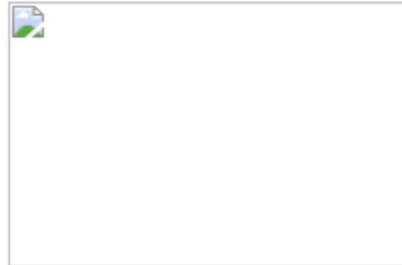
Stacey Plaskett  
Member of Congress  
United States Virgin Islands

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## JOIN OUR PUBLIC FACEBOOK GROUP: USVI HURRICANE IRMA ALERT

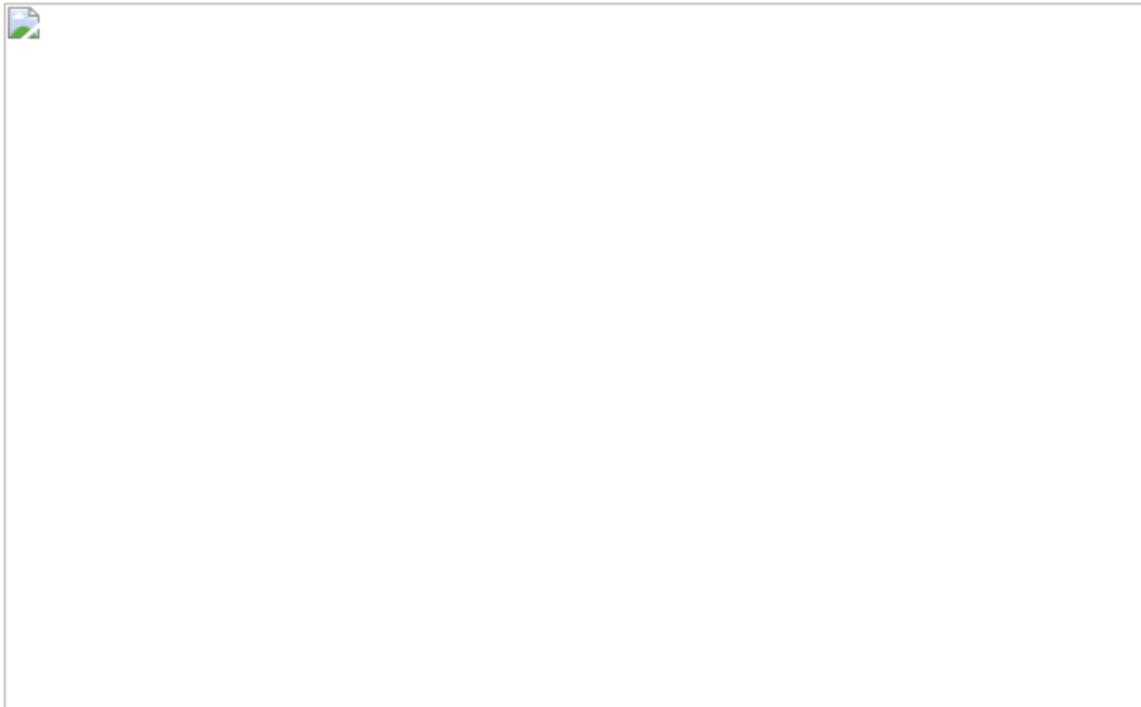
Congresswoman Plaskett's staff have created a public Facebook Group to serve as a forum to share information real time on the response to Hurricane Irma.

[Click here to visit our  
USVI Hurricane Irma Alert Facebook Group](#)



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## CONGRESSWOMAN PLASKETT DISCUSSES RESPONSE TO HURRICANE IRMA ON MSNBC



*Click on the image above to watch Congresswoman Plaskett's interview on Friday.*



**NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER UPDATE ON HURRICANE JOSE**



At 8:00 PM AST, the eye of Hurricane Jose was located near latitude 16.7 North, longitude 58.8 West. Jose is moving toward the west-northwest near 17 mph (28 km/h). A turn toward the northwest with a decrease in forward speed is forecast to begin overnight and continue through the weekend. On the forecast track, the core of Jose will pass close to or just east of the northern Leeward Islands.

Maximum sustained winds are near 150 mph (240 km/h) with higher gusts. Jose is a category 4 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale. Some fluctuation in intensity, up or down, could occur during the next day or so. Gradual weakening is expected after that.

Hurricane-force winds extend outward up to 35 miles (55 km) from the center and tropical-storm-force winds extend outward up to 140 miles (220 km).

The estimated minimum central pressure based observations from the Air Force Hurricane Hunters is 938 mb (27.70 inches).

#### **HAZARDS AFFECTING LAND**

**WIND:** Hurricane conditions are likely within the hurricane warning area on Saturday. Hurricane conditions are also possible within the hurricane watch area on Saturday. Tropical storm conditions are expected within the tropical storm warning areas by

Saturday morning. Tropical storm conditions are possible in the tropical storm watch area in the northeastern Leeward Islands by Saturday morning and in the watch area in the Virgin Islands by Saturday night.

**RAINFALL:** Jose is expected to produce total rain accumulations of 3 to 5 inches in the Leeward Islands from Guadeloupe to Anguilla, with isolated maximum amounts of 8 inches. Jose is also expected to produce total rain accumulations of 1 to 3 inches over the Virgin Islands and Dominica. This rainfall will maintain any ongoing flooding and may cause additional life-threatening flooding.

**STORM SURGE:** A dangerous storm surge will raise water levels by 2 to 4 feet above normal tide levels along the immediate coast in the hurricane warning areas. Near the coast, the surge will be accompanied by large and destructive waves.

**SURF:** Swells generated by Jose are affecting portions of the Leeward Islands. These swells are expected to continue for a couple of days, and could cause life-threatening surf and rip current conditions. Please consult products from your local weather office.

## PREPARING YOUR HOME OR BUSINESS

### Basic Disaster Supplies Kit

To assemble your kit, store items in airtight plastic bags and put your entire disaster supplies kit in one or two easy-to-carry containers such as plastic bins or a duffel bag.

A basic emergency supply kit could include the following recommended items:

- Water - one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food - at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food \* Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert
- Flashlight
- First aid kit
- Extra batteries
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Manual can opener for food
- Local maps
- Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery

[Download the Recommended Supplies List \(PDF\) from Ready.gov](#)

### Additional Emergency Supplies

Consider adding the following items to your emergency supply kit based on your individual needs:

- Prescription medications
- Non-prescription medications such as pain relievers, anti-diarrhea medication, antacids or laxatives
- Glasses and contact lens solution
- Infant formula, bottles, diapers, wipes, diaper rash cream
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Cash or traveler's checks
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records saved electronically or in a waterproof, portable

- container
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Complete change of clothing appropriate for your climate and sturdy shoes
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper to disinfect water
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates, paper towels and plastic utensils
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

#### **Before the storm**

- Replenish supplies of batteries, non-perishable foods
- Charge cell phones
- Check working conditions of radios and flash-lights
- Stay tuned to radio weather updates
- Turn refrigerator and freezer to its coldest set-ting to keep food fresh as long as possible
- Avoid opening door frequently
- Install Hurricane Shutters
- Prepare windows with boards, shutters or tape
- Secure objects around your home that may fly away and cause danger
- Unplug electrical equipment
- Discuss with your family the type of hazards that could affect your home. e.g. storm surge, flooding and wind; devise and agree to an evacuation plan
- Consume perishable foods first, then frozen foods.

#### **After the storm**

- Stay tuned to radio weather updates and news reports
- Stay clear of downed power lines
- Do not cut power or telephone lines
- Do not touch fallen or low-hanging wires
- Report unsafe electrical condition
- Locate generators away from open windows and enclosed areas

## **EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

[InformUSVI](#)- special USVI Government Hurricane website

### **VITEMA**

St. Thomas: (340) 774-2244  
 St. Croix: (340) 773-2244  
 St. John: (340) 776-6444

### **Government House / Office of the Governor**

### **WAPA Electrical and Water Emergencies**

Please include the following information when calling the WAPA Emergency Call Centers: Your name, account number, location, contact number, directions and nature of problem.

St. Croix: (340) 773-0150  
 St. Thomas/St. John/Water Island: (340) 774-1424

### **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**

[U.S. Coast Guard](#)

[American Red Cross](#)



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