

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Chicago, IL (March 22, 2018)— Six months ago Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico, yet many towns still lack full power generation and drinkable water. Members of the Puerto Rican Agenda will travel to Puerto Rico with a Chicago delegation including Congressman Luis V. Gutiérrez and Mayor Rahm Emanuel to meet with the mayors of San Juan, Comerío, and Loiza Aldea on March 23, 2018 for a humanitarian visit.

5,200 pounds of supplies collected by the Agenda, including solar lights and panels, will be distributed to local groups in Moca and Humacao, as well as critical medical supplies to the HIMA San Pablo Hospital System that services several towns across the island. Additionally, the Agenda will present \$4,000 each to schools in Comerio and Loiza as a youth-to-youth fundraising initiative highlighting the social responsibility of Chicago-based children supporting efforts in Puerto Rico.

After sending two airplanes with emergency aid and raising \$300,000 to provide aid in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, the Agenda continues to focus efforts with the 3Rs campaign: *Rescue, Relief, and Rebuild*. In February 2018, The Chicago Community Trust awarded a \$100,000 grant to support the Agenda's track record of employing immediate, meaningful, and transparent strategies resulting in micro-grants for emergency supplies, solar panels, generators, medicine, and construction materials in 30 towns on the island.

The Agenda will use a portion of The Chicago Community Trust grant to seed the *Adopt a Pueblo* project under the umbrella of the 3Rs campaign. The mountainous town of Comerío and coastal town of Loiza Aldea, have been selected for deeper investments because they represent two hard hit towns on the island. Plans include exploring sustainable construction and community-led rebuilding brigades.

BACKGROUND: The Puerto Rican Agenda of Chicago was the first organization of the Puerto Rican Diaspora to land an airplane filled with emergency cargo to the island, and to have that same plane return with 300 people stranded in the airport on the island. Since Hurricane Maria, the Puerto Rican Agenda has raised over \$400,000 and directed funds for aid and micro-grants to 30 municipalities and organizations in Puerto Rico. This grassroots all-volunteer effort has been bolstered by the intervention of Congressman Luis V. Gutiérrez, Mayor Rahm Emanuel, United Airlines CEO Oscar Muñoz, and Governor Bruce Rauner.

Additionally, the Agenda has worked closely with the City of Chicago of Office of Emergency Management and Communication and 26th Ward Alderman Roberto Maldonado to establish the first full-service Hurricane Resource Center in Humboldt Park through May 1, 2018. To date over 2,000 evacuees from Puerto Rico have been connected to local, state, and federal resources.

The Puerto Rican Agenda is non-profit organization of local Puerto Rican leaders that influences policy for the advancement of the Puerto Rican community in Chicago. Over the past two decades, the Agenda continues to develop and execute a community-driven vision for the Humboldt Park Area, where most Puerto Ricans in Chicago live, and Paseo Boricua, a business and entertainment district on Division Street between California and Western.

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For over 100 years, The Chicago Community Trust, our region's community foundation, has connected the generosity of donors with community needs by making grants to nonprofit organizations working to improve metropolitan Chicago. Since 1915, the Trust has awarded over \$2 billion in grant funding to more than 11,000 local nonprofit organizations- including more than \$236 million in 2016. From strengthening schools to assisting local art programs, from building health centers to protecting the safety net for those hardest hit by the recession, the Trust continues to enhance our region. To learn more, please visit the Trust online at www.cct.org.

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