STUDENT SENATE RESOLUTION 2017-129

TITLE: Resolution Supporting the People of Puerto Rico Including Students Affected by Hurricane Maria

AUTHOR (S): Senator Andrea Rangel

SPONSOR (S): Senator Katelyn Hernandez, Senator Maria Perez, STAAR Agency Head Evelyn Veras, Hispanic Student Association President Robert Lemus, Union of Active Puerto Rican Students President Angel David Santiago Ortiz, Senator Dylan Santalo

WHEREAS in May 2017, Puerto Rico filed for Bankruptcy Protection due to being approximately 74 billion dollars in debt and 49 billion dollars in pension liabilities¹; and,

WHEREAS, with an even stronger blow to their economy, on September 20th, 2017, the category 4 Hurricane Maria made direct landfall on Puerto Rico, leaving the U.S. Territory with a catastrophic humanitarian crisis and an even deeper economic crisis²; and,

WHEREAS, many resources, including water, medicine, food, and fuel, are scarce on the island primarily due to the fact that the Jones Act limits foreign countries from providing aid³; and,

WHEREAS, as of October 11th, 2017, 89% of the island was without electricity, leaving many people relying on generators and without electricity for an estimated 6 months⁴; and,

WHEREAS, since fuel is scarce, it is very difficult to power generators that are being used for hospitals, limiting the access to diagnostic and life-saving equipment; and,

WHEREAS, Governor Rick Scott has allowed all Florida College System institutions to offer in-state tuition to Puerto Rican students who were affected by Hurricane Maria and has waived many rules to allow Puerto Rican students to attend schools in Florida⁵; and,

WHEREAS, the Union of Active Puerto Rican Students has been working alongside 700+ students and more than 50 Universities to raise more than 200 thousand dollars toward Unidos por Puerto Rico⁶; and,

WHEREAS, as one united Gator Nation, we support students who were affected and are currently being affected by this and any humanitarian crisis; then,
THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the importance of spreading awareness about important issues abroad.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate encourages students to utilize resources such as UMatter We Care, UF Student Financial Affairs Office, and Multicultural and Diversity Affairs for more information and support.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FINALLY RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate aligns its support with Governor Rick Scott and the University of Florida on their commitment to Puerto Rican students.

Ian Green
Senate President

Date

10-23-17

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to President of the Hispanic Student Association Robert Lenius, President of UEPA Angel David Santiago, Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Parrott, Interim Dean of Students Heather White, Multicultural and Diversity Affairs Director of Hispanic-Latino Affairs Gabe Lara,

\[iv\] http://fortune.com/2017/05/04/puerto-rico-bankruptcy-debt/?iid=sr-link1
\[vi\] https://www.facebook.com/UFUEPA/