

## PA-01 Member of Congress Tracking Report - 01.12.20

This is a 100% volunteer effort brought to you by a handful of progressive Democrats and Independents who share a vision of an informed electorate. We want to offer a big thank you to the [Pennsylvania Together](#), [Pennsylvania Statewide Indivisible](#) and [Demcast](#) organizations who host our report and help us share it out to the residents of our Commonwealth!

### Tracking Congress in the Age of Trump

The lower the number, the more the legislator votes in opposition to the Trump agenda.

Member of Congress	This week's score	Change from last report
<a href="#">Senator Bob Casey (D)</a>	<b>28.9%</b>	<b>+0.6%</b>
<a href="#">Senator Pat Toomey (R)</a>	<b>88.1%</b>	<b>+0.1%</b>
<a href="#">PA-01 Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R)</a>	<b>66.2%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

Nate Silver's [FiveThirtyEight website](#) assesses the voting records of our MoCs to provide this index, by comparing any legislation where President Trump has stated a position, and comparing the vote of each MoC to the President's opinion. The two House votes scored this week relate to the war powers resolution regarding Iran and a water pollution bill. The confirmation of a new head of the Small Business Administration was the sole Senate vote scored this week.

Want to see exactly what votes went into giving your MoC the numbers above? Click on the name of any legislator and you will be brought to their 538 webpage, where all of the positions that went into the index are listed in an easy-to-read format.

### Votes of Interest

#### The House looks to protect their constitutionally assigned War Powers

[House Vote](#) on [H. Con. Res. 83](#): Directing the President pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers

Resolution to terminate the use of United States Armed Forces to engage in hostilities in or against Iran

This is a non-binding resolution that states:

Pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1544(c)), Congress hereby **directs the President to terminate the use of United States Armed Forces to engage in hostilities in or against Iran** or any part of its government or military, unless...

(1) Congress has declared war or enacted specific statutory authorization for such use of the Armed Forces; or (2) such use of the Armed Forces is necessary and appropriate to defend against an imminent armed attack upon the United States, its territories or possessions, or its Armed Forces, consistent with the requirements of the War Powers Resolution.

**Vote date:** Thursday, January 9, 2020

**Vote Tally:** 224-194 (passed)

**Party Breakdown:** Most Democrats voted YES, with the 8 voting NO coming mainly from moderate lawmakers, recently flipped districts, or "Problem Solvers"; Most Republicans voted NO, with the 3 YES votes coming from the Freedom Caucus; the Independent voted YES

#### Additional Reading:

- ["House votes to rein in Trump on Iran,"](#) from *Politico*
- ["The lawmakers who bucked their parties on the war powers resolution,"](#) from *The Hill*
- ["Sources: Trump furious over House War Powers vote,"](#) from *CNN*
- ["Matt Gaetz, the 'Trumpiest Congressman,' cites principles for bucking president on war powers. Kevin McCarthy is 'very shocked.'" from the \*Washington Post\*](#)

**Fitzpatrick did not place a vote.**

## Regulations on Contaminants in Pennsylvania waters get a vote in the House

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 535](#): PFAS Action Act

PFAS are “forever chemicals” that cause damaging medical conditions. They were introduced to our water supply via firefighting foams used on military bases, and a number of communities in Pennsylvania have been adversely affected by their presence. There have been several attempts to get the military to deal with assessing and ameliorating PFAS contamination, most recently in the National Defense Authorization Act that passed in December, but the portions related to PFAS were stripped out when the bill went to conference. In the aftermath of that decision, this bill was put on the House schedule.

**Vote date:** Friday, January 10, 2020

**Vote Tally:** 247-159 (passed)

**Party Breakdown:** All but one Democrat (Ben McAdams of Utah) voted YES; Most Republicans voted NO, but 24 voted YES; the Independent voted NO.

### Additional Reading:

- [“The House just voted to regulate PFAS. Here’s what you need to know,”](#) from *PBS News Hour*
- [“U.S. House passes bill to address PFAS; unclear if Senate will act,”](#) from the *Star Tribune*
- [“House passes major PFAS bill in face of White House veto threat,”](#) from *Michigan Live*

**Fitzpatrick did not place a vote.**

## Bureaucratic Confirmation #1

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Jovita Carranza Administrator of the Small Business Administration

Jovita Carranza is currently the US Treasurer and has worked extensively on the [opportunity zone program](#). Her past career includes work as a deputy SBA administrator in the George W. Bush administration. *The Hill* referred to her as “an ally” of Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin. Carranza is filling the role vacated by Linda McMahon (of World Wrestling Entertainment fame), who left to lead a Trump SuperPAC in advance of the 2020 election season. During her confirmation hearing Carranza [said](#) that she will “expand access to SBA resources among entrepreneurs in disadvantaged communities, including African-American and Latino businesses, as well as businesses started by veterans.”

**Vote date:** Tuesday, January 7, 2020

**Vote Tally:** 88-5 (confirmed)

**Party Breakdown:** All five NO votes were from Democrats

### Additional Reading:

- [“Senate confirms Trump pick for small business chief,”](#) from *The Hill*
- [“Jovita Carranza confirmed as SBA administrator after nine-month delay,”](#) from *American Banker*
- [“More Firms Will Now Be Eligible for Government Small Business Contracts,”](#) from *Government Executive*

**Casey voted YES and Toomey voted YES**

## Bureaucratic Confirmation #2

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Paul J. Ray to be Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget

This is a position that is referred to as the “regulation czar,” though in the case of the Trump Administration, it would be more appropriation to say this is the nation’s chief Deregulator. Paul Ray, the nominee, has experience in both the public and private sector. He clerked for Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito, and he has served as counsel for a number of industry groups, like the American Chemistry Council, American Forest and Paper Association, National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), Portland Cement Association, and U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

**Vote date:** Thursday, January 9, 2020

**Vote Tally:** 50-44 (confirmed)

**Party Breakdown:** This was a pure party line vote. The Democrats and Independents present voted NO and the Republicans voted YES.

### Additional Reading:

- [“Trump Taps Former Labor Counsel as White House Regulatory Chief,”](#) from *Bloomberg Law*
- [“Who will be Trump’s next regs czar? Here are 4 contenders,”](#) from *E&E News*

- [“Senate Committee Advances Paul Ray’s Nomination to Be Regulations Czar,”](#) from *Government Executive*

**Casey voted NO and Toomey voted YES**

### **Judicial Confirmation**

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Eleni Maria Roumel to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years

The Federal Claims Court is a special segment of the judiciary that deals with “complex factual and statutory construction issues in tax law,” according to their website. They also handle bid and contract law disputes and “intellectual property, Indian tribe, and various statutory claims against the United States.” Unlike many other judicial positions, confirmed judges do not get lifetime appointments, but instead serve for 15 years. [The Vetting Room](#) outlined the problems facing this special court:

the U.S. Court of Federal Claims (CFC) is facing a vacancy crisis. One of the factors exacerbating the situation is the Trump Administration’s slow pace in nominations and their predilection for naming young attorneys with little background in the court’s specialized docket. The nomination of Eleni Roumel follows that pattern.

The current nominee has worked in the private sector for a number of large firms before serving as assistant counsel to the US House of Representative (while it was under GOP control) and then deputy counsel to Vice President Mike Pence. There is little in her resume to show that she is qualified to serve on this court where a deep technical knowledge is a prerequisite.

**Vote date:** Wednesday, January 8, 2020      **Vote Tally:** 51-47 (confirmed)

**Party Breakdown:** This was a pure party line vote. The Democrats and Independents present voted NO and the Republicans voted YES.

Additional Reading:

- The United States Court of Federal Claims website, [“About the Court”](#) page
- [“Eleni Roumel – Nominee to the U.S. Court of Federal Claims,”](#) from *The Vetting Room*
- [“Eleni Roumel,”](#) from *Ballotpedia*

**Casey voted NO and Toomey voted YES**

### **Unanimously passed items**

The following bills were passed through unanimous consent or voice vote (which presumes unanimity, as any member can object to the voice vote and ask for a roll call). This list excludes bills related to post offices, stamps, memorials, awareness weeks and other ceremonial activities.

- [S. Res. 464](#): A resolution to constitute the majority party’s membership on certain committees for the One Hundred Sixteenth Congress, or until their successors are chosen. *(This shifted the committee membership of a number of Republicans. Senator Toomey’s assignments were not changed.)*
- [S. 3076](#): An original bill to release a federal reversionary interest in Chester County, Tennessee, to manage certain Federal land in Bath County, Virginia
- [H. Res. 776](#), [H. Res. 777](#) and [H. Res. 778](#): *(These are three procedural/ceremonial resolutions performed at the start of each year. They notify the Senate and the President that the House of Representatives is in session and set a standard meeting time for House business to start.)*
- [H.R. 583](#): Preventing Illegal Radio Abuse Through Enforcement Act or the PIRATE Act
- [H.R. 3763](#): Promoting United States International Leadership in 5G Act
- [H.R. 4500](#): Promoting United States Wireless Leadership Act
- [H.R. 5065](#): Prison to Proprietorship for Formerly Incarcerated Act
- [H.R. 5130](#): Capturing All Small Businesses Act
- [H.R. 5146](#): Unlocking Opportunities for Small Businesses Act
- [H.Res. 575](#): Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that all stakeholders in the deployment of 5G communications infrastructure should carefully consider adherence to the recommendations of ‘The Prague Proposals’
- [S. 1611](#): Developing Innovation and Growing the Internet of Things Act or the DIGIT Act

- [S.Res. 142](#): A resolution condemning the Government of the Philippines for its continued detention of Senator Leila De Lima, calling for her immediate release
- [S. Res. 447](#): A resolution expressing serious concern about widespread irregularities in Bolivia's October 20, 2019, general elections and supporting the convening of new elections in Bolivia at the earliest possible date
- [H.R. 925](#): America's Conservation Enhancement Act
- [S. 1982](#): Save Our Seas 2.0 Act
- [S. 2629](#): United States Public Health Service Modernization Act

## Our MoCs talk about the assassination of Qasem Soleiman, the airstrike on our base in Iraq and the War Powers Resolution House vote

### ● Senator Bob Casey, 01/03/20, from [his official website](#):

"Qassim Suleimani was a military figure who inflicted terror and killed thousands in Israel, Iraq, Syria and other places. He was directly responsible for the killing of hundreds of American soldiers and civilians. The world is safer with him gone.

The Trump Administration must provide a full briefing to Congress next week regarding the following:

- The intelligence used to authorize the strike;
- The legal basis for the strike;
- The nature of the threat articulated by the Pentagon in its statement last night; and
- The preparations and planning the Administration has undertaken regarding potential retaliation by the Iranian regime against Americans abroad and here at home.

I have grave concerns that President Trump and his Administration have not provided the American people with a comprehensive strategy on Iran. Finally, this and other recent actions by the Administration have been taken without a Congressionally approved Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF). As we prepare for fallout in the coming days, Congress has a critical role to play in assessing the legality of the strike, understanding its impact on U.S. national security and conducting oversight over this Administration's actions abroad."

### ● Senator Pat Toomey, 01/03/20, from [his official website](#):

"Qasem Soleimani was responsible for the murder of hundreds of Americans. The world is a better place now that he is dead. Every American should be grateful to our armed forces who carried out this strike with incredible skill and precision. The Trump administration was right to restore deterrence against Iran."

### ● PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, 01/03/20, from [his official website](#):

"Qasem Soleimani, leader of Iran's Quds force, is directly responsible for the deaths of hundreds of American servicemen and servicewomen. Soleimani perpetuated the Iranian regime's destabilizing proxy wars across the Middle East and carried out numerous terrorist attacks on behalf of Iran—the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism. According to the Defense Department, Soleimani was imminently plotting even more attacks on American servicemen and servicewomen, and therefore the air strike was needed to protect our American soldiers, diplomats, and civilians serving in critical missions in the region. Iran's attacks on the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, their mounting aggression against the United States in the region, and their direct and imminent threats to Americans serving in critical missions abroad cannot be ignored."

## Twitter Action - Tweet of the Week

*This is a mix of the best and worst to come from the fingertips of our Pennsylvania MoCs this week.*

### ● Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, [01/10/20](#):

“Slashing the ACA would disproportionately harm people with disabilities who rely on Medicaid not only for their health, but to go to work, live in their communities and take care of their families. Americans with disabilities deserve better from our leaders. #ProtectOurCare”

**Protect Our Care** @ProtectOurCare · Jan 9  
#Medicaid is a lifeline for people with disabilities. If the Trump-GOP lawsuit succeeds, 17 MILLION people covered by #MedicaidExpansion — including individuals with disabilities — will lose coverage. We can't let that happen. #ProtectOurCare #MedicaidMatters



● **Senator Pat Toomey, @SenToomey, [01/03/20](#):**

“A great way to lower health care costs is by empowering consumers to make informed choices. Kudos to @realDonaldTrump and his staff for working to make health care prices and quality far more transparent to patients. Read about this initiative here.”



Opinion: Trump's efforts to make medical prices transparent are good for America

*This was tweeted with a link to a CNN Business opinion piece titled “[Trump's efforts to make medical prices transparent are good for America](#).” If you would like to read an alternative opinion piece from your MoCTrack editor about why this GOP talking point of market solutions and transparency is ridiculous and unworkable, it can be found in the [Bucks County Courier Times](#)*

● PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, @RepBrianFitz, [01/06/20](#):



My heart is broken. My big brother Mike was my hero and my best friend. Ever since I was little, I wanted to live up to him and be just like Mike in every way. He was the greatest brother and the greatest public servant our community has ever known. His twelve-year courageous battle with cancer has taught our entire family his values of perseverance in the face of overwhelming odds. Mike has forever touched the lives of so many in our community. Young, old, and everyone in between. Our Heavenly Father has called him home. He has gone from my hero to my guardian angel. I love you so much big brother. And I will see you soon.

## Casey in the News

*Courtesy of contributor Linda Houk*

"We live in a country where people were lied to from Vietnam and Iraq and maybe beyond that. The American people need and deserve the answers to these basic questions."

—from an article on [KYW News Radio](#) titled "[Toomey, Casey divided along party lines after debriefing on Iran](#)"

"We know the price Pennsylvania families have paid in war over many generations. In Iraq, 197 Pennsylvanians were killed. In Afghanistan, there were 91. Add the number who served in Iraq or Afghanistan who were wounded, — some of them grievously, permanently wounded — and that number is in the thousands." ... "We've paid a substantial price, and I want to make sure if this or any administration or any congress is pursuing a war against Iran that we make decisions based on what the constitution requires and that we do that in full view of the American people."

— from an article in [Trib Live](#) titled "[Pennsylvania's senators split on reasons behind killing of Iranian general](#)"

"They haven't really gotten their story straight. What was the reason for the strike? That story seems to change if not by the hour then by the day."

"The American people have the right to be informed... I think they are on the path to regime change. I don't think the President understands that. I think that is where some members of the administration are heading."

"If you have the right strategy, it would be the strategy to lessen the possibility of war and to reduce the possibility that they will have a nuclear program."

—from an article on [Local 21 News](#) titled "[They haven't gotten their story straight.](#)" [Senator Casey laments Iran strike](#)'

“You have to have a resolution like this to constrain the actions of the administration... If this administration wants to take us to war or take us in the direction of war, these issues have to be debated.”  
—from an article on [WFLA News](#) on “[House to vote on resolution limiting president’s military power](#)”

Senator Casey also participated in a wide-ranging interview with The Center Square on healthcare and the coming election, reported in an article titled “[Casey: Democrats have ‘no common ground’ with Republicans in health care fight](#).” Here are some of our Senator’s quotes from that article:

- “Because of Democratic leadership by President [Barack] Obama and by Democrats on the House and the Senate, we finally got to the point where we could say that 20 million more Americans had health care (in) just over six years... That didn’t take us 20 years or 15 years or even 10 years. In about six years, 20 million people got health care.”
- “They are all on the other side. We are all on this side. And you know what? We’re going to win.”
- “This is a terrible, destructive lawsuit if it succeeds... It may be a decision by the Republican-controlled corporate Supreme Court, and I say that purposefully. This is a Supreme Court now that is controlled largely by corporate interests in a 5-to-4 majority. They may be the final word on it.”
- “When those Republicans come in front of us in 2020, we’re going to ask them a couple of questions. Why are you for the destruction of health care through the lawsuit? Why are you for the dismantlement of health care through the sabotage? And why are you for the divestment or defunding of health care through the cuts to Medicare and Medicaid?”
- “You could say, ‘OK, Mr. or Mrs. Voter; you have a choice to make on president. You can support the Republican president for re-election, or you can protect your pre-existing conditions. What is it? What are you going to do?’”
- “That’s your choice because if you support Republican policies on health care, you’re going to continue to get that destructive lawsuit, you’re going to continue to get the cuts and you’re going to continue to get the sabotage. And that is not who we are as a nation, as a people and as a society.”

## Fitzpatrick in the News

As last year wound down, Bucks County Republican U.S. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick said the reason bipartisan proposals on everything from infrastructure to opioids remained stalled was because Democrats decided to impeach rather than forge compromises.

“Look what they’re focusing on right now,” Fitzpatrick said. “It’s taken up a lot of time.”

— that quote, and the assessment that provides the framing for the quote, came from an article on the [WHYY](#) website, titled “[2020 could be a headache for Congress members from Philly region](#)”

“Soleimani was imminently plotting even more attacks on American servicemen and servicewomen, and therefore the air strike was needed to protect our American soldiers, diplomats and civilians serving in critical missions in the region.”

— from a blog post on the [Ripon Advance](#) titled “[Thornberry, Fitzpatrick, Katko support U.S. killing of Iranian terrorist leader](#)”

“My heart is broken. My big brother Mike was my hero and my best friend. Ever since I was little, I wanted to live up to him and be just like Mike in every way. He was the greatest brother and the greatest public servant our community has ever known. His twelve-year courageous battle with cancer has taught our entire family his values of perseverance in the face of overwhelming odds. Mike has forever touched the lives of so many in our community. Young, old, and everyone in between. Our Heavenly Father has called him home. He has gone from my hero to my guardian angel. I love you so much big brother. And I will see you soon.”

— the Congressman's comments on the passing of his brother, from the [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) article titled "[Mike Fitzpatrick, a former Republican congressman from the Philadelphia suburbs, has died at 56](#)"

## Toomey in the News

*Courtesy of contributor Elayne Baker*

"We need to keep in mind what a dangerous pariah state Iran has chosen to be by virtue of its leadership. It is without a doubt the world's number one state sponsor of terrorism... When our intelligence services learned they were planning an even more dramatic series of attacks on Americans, and that it would be occurring very soon, it would have been irresponsible not to respond to that. The killing maximized the chances that we would disrupt or prevent these imminent attacks."

— from an article in [The Sunbury Daily Item](#) titled "[Toomey lauds U.S. intelligence community; Casey wants more info on decision to kill Iranian general](#)"

"I support what the president decided to do here. I think the context is very important here."

It is very hard to overstate the centrality of his role in all of Iran's malicious behavior, especially outside the borders of Iran. Obviously, he was the leader of the Quds which itself has been rightly designated as a terrorist organization. He was the mastermind behind developing, arming, directing and training Iranian proxies throughout the entire region in Iraq and Syria and Lebanon and Afghanistan."

You can't kill Americans with impunity. In my view, there were two reasons why the president did the right thing. The first, by killing Soleimani, we maximize the chances that we would disrupt or prevent this attack or series of attacks. That's an important obligation, to protect Americans. The second, it was necessary. It became necessary to restore deterrence, to restore to Iranian calculations that if you kill an American, very bad consequences will follow. They were not convinced of that,"

— from an article in [The Bradford Era](#) titled "[Thompson, Toomey back strike on Iranian general, Casey not so sure](#)"

"Donating food to the less fortunate should be as easy as possible, but liability concerns limit the number of people who can be served by food banks."

—from an article in [The Times Online](#) titled "[Toomey bill could steer more food to those in need](#)"

"[NAFTA] needed modernization... But that's not the real reason that this agreement was renegotiated. The real reason was because we have a trade deficit with Mexico, and the [Trump] Administration deemed that to be unacceptable."

— from a [WESA](#) article titled "[Toomey Opposes Updated Trade Deal As It Moves One Step Closer To Ratification.](#)" The article added that "[Toomey criticized such measures as being 'designed to restrict trade and investment,' and predicted, 'we'll get no economic growth out of this.'](#)"

"I don't think the president needs a permission slip from Congress when he's acting in a way to keep Americans safe... Part of the responsibility of the Commander-in-Chief is to keep Americans safe when he can. Soleimani was clearly a threat to American lives."

— from an article in [Erie News Now](#) titled "[Senators split as Democrats draft War Powers Resolution](#)"

## Learning about Legislation - War Powers and Authorizations for Use of Military Force, revisited

*This content was originally shared in a MoCTrack from October 2017, when tensions with North Korea were at a critical point. With the past week's events in Iran, it seems a good time to revisit this topic.*

The *Washington Post* [reported](#) that 4 in 10 Americans thought, incorrectly, that the Constitution grants the power to declare war to the President. A little more than half of respondents got that question right. In light of that situation, it seems appropriate to look at how our nation deals with war powers, and how that power has shifted in the last century.

The Constitution gives the power to declare war to the Congress. Amidst a long list of Congressional responsibilities, Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution says, "The Congress shall have power...to declare war." But it also says, in Article II, Section 2, "the President shall be commander in chief of the Army and Navy of the United States." This check and balance, which was meant to protect the population by ensuring that any war was well debated and supported by the majority, led to several conflicts. If the President is the head of the armed forces, can he deploy troops overseas to a location where the Congress has not declared war? How do we deal with situations where our troops are involved in armed conflict, but the Congress hasn't declared war?

After the conflict in Viet Nam, a "police action" where Congress never declared war, Congress decided to take legislative action. In 1973 they passed the War Powers Resolution. This extensive bit of legislation is described as follows by the [Library of Congress](#):

"The first part states the policy behind the law, namely to insure that the collective judgment of both the Congress and the President will apply to the introduction of United States Armed Forces into hostilities, and that the President's powers as Commander in Chief are exercised only pursuant to a declaration of war, specific statutory authorization from Congress, or a national emergency created by an attack upon the United States...;

the second part requires the President to consult with Congress before introducing U.S. armed forces into hostilities or situations where hostilities are imminent, and to continue such consultations as long as U.S. armed forces remain in such situations...;

the third part sets forth reporting requirements that the President must comply with...;

the fourth part of the law...requires that U.S. forces be withdrawn from hostilities within 60 days of the time a report is submitted unless Congress acts to approve continued military action...;

the fifth part of the law sets forth certain definitions and rules to be used when interpreting the War Powers Resolution."

When Congress wants to authorize hostilities, they pass legislation called "Authorization for Use of Military Force" or AUMF. After the 9/11 attacks, the Congress passed the 'Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists' in 2002. That AUMF is still in effect, and has been interpreted as giving the last three presidents the right to take military action not just in the Middle East and Afghanistan, but also in the Philippines, Georgia, Yemen, Djibouti, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia

This situation is made more complex, though, by nuclear weapons. A [PBS article](#) describes that situation best, noting "During the Cold War, the U.S. military built an elaborate system to control the thousands of nuclear weapons in this country. There are many checks and balances, no officers who work with intercontinental ballistic missiles, nuclear armed aircraft, or nuclear submarines can launch missiles alone. They always work in twos, or sometimes entire teams. But there is an exception to that. The entire system is designed to respond to the sole decision of the president." So, while the president could not

(Constitutionally) declare war entirely on his own, he can (procedurally) make the decision and have the armed forces drop a nuclear bomb anywhere on his say-so alone.

*Hopefully that provides the content needed, so that when you hear our MoCs expressing their positions on AUMFs or limiting the President's power to initiate hostilities with another country you understand their authority.*

## **Call to Action - HELP Puerto Rico!**

For the last 15 days Puerto Rico has been [afflicted with multiple earthquakes](#), ranging in magnitude from 5.9 to 6.4. Buildings are collapsing, there are massive power outages, and with roads destroyed, there are portions at the south of the island that are completely cut off. People are sleeping outside for fear of buildings collapsing upon them as they sleep. The situation is DIRE.

This situation is made infinitely worse by the fact that under the Trump Administration, the Department of Housing and Urban Development has [delayed sending \\$18 BILLION](#) in post-Maria aid - money that was already appropriated by Congress - to Puerto Rico.

## **THERE ARE THREE THINGS YOU CAN DO.**

### **ONE: SEND AID**

An [Amazon wish-list](#) has been created with items like hygiene kits, portable water filtration, first aid kits, batteries, power bars, and earthquake bags. If you purchase from this list, when you check out, select the "Providence Center's Gift Registry Address" from the available shipping locations. Then your purchase will be collected at the Providence Center of Philadelphia, and from there it will be shipped to Puerto Rico.

### **TWO: TURN OUT**

The People for Puerto Rico and PA Statewide Indivisible, along with allies from Make the Road PA, will be going to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Mid-Atlantic Region office. They are located at 100 Penn Square East in Philadelphia. The protest will be held at 4PM on Wednesday, January 15th. For more information, see this [Facebook event link](#).

### **THREE: JOIN the TWEETSTORM**

On Wednesday, January 15th at 8:00PM there will be a Tweetstorm to put pressure on HUD to release Puerto Rico's long-delayed aid. Use the hashtag #ReleaseThePRAid. And any time that evening, search for that hashtag, and retweet or comment upon any of the content you see there.

This report brought to you by the Pennsylvania MoCTrack team...

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We can always use additional assistance. Our Congresspeople are always busy and there is always more for us to cover — tasks big and small to fit any level of time commitment or experience. Can you help us out? Please email [KierstynPZ@gmail.com](mailto:KierstynPZ@gmail.com) and put "MoCTrack Help" in the subject. Thanks!