

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 8, 2017

COMMITTEES:  
APPROPRIATIONS  
FOREIGN RELATIONS  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE  
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Honorable Tom Price  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Price:

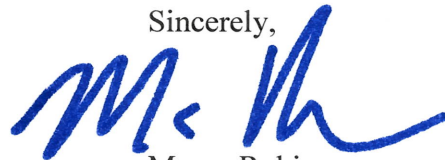
Thank you for your continued leadership in response to Hurricane Harvey, and your efforts to protect Americans in Florida, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and elsewhere from Hurricane Irma. Your department's efforts are critical to ensuring a rapid, effective response that will save lives.

To that end, I respectfully ask that you continue to coordinate with state and local governments to ensure they are prepared and able to quickly respond to Floridians once Irma passes. I would appreciate updates about ongoing coordination with health care providers, including hospitals, inpatient nursing facilities, and home health providers. Specifically, has the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) distributed information about best practices for evacuating vulnerable patients, if needed, and how to provide necessary medical services to patients that are not evacuated?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "mosquito populations will greatly increase" following a storm.<sup>1</sup> The CDC continues to advise those "living in or traveling to Miami-Dade County to continue to protect themselves from mosquito-borne illnesses, including the Zika virus," and this same area of Florida is expected to be greatly impacted by Hurricane Irma.<sup>2</sup> While there is a possibility that a number of mosquitos and their larvae will not survive the storm, I believe it would be prudent for the federal government to be ready to respond to an increase of mosquitos carrying the Zika virus. Any information and proactive measures your department can provide on its plans to respond to increases in mosquito populations in the wake of Hurricane Irma would be greatly appreciated.

I look forward to working with you to ensure Florida and U.S. territories are prepared to handle Hurricane Irma. Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/vector/mosquitoes-and-hurricanes.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/intheus/florida-update.html>