

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 4, 2019

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As Bahamians are just now beginning to confront the catastrophic aftermath of Hurricane Dorian, which stalled over parts of the country for nearly two days as a Major Category 5 hurricane, we write to respectfully ask that your administration waive, or otherwise suspend, certain visa requirements for affected citizens of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas who have relatives in the United States with whom they can reside as they begin the process of rebuilding their lives and their country.

Incoming images and media reports indicate that thousands of homes have been destroyed and the basic infrastructure of many communities simply no longer exists. Many government services, including those of the United States government, are not functioning in the affected areas at this time. As Americans, and others throughout our hemisphere and across the globe, work to provide aid and assistance for the many needs of the Bahamian people at this time, perhaps one of the most basic yet meaningful steps our government can take immediately is to ensure that those who have lost everything, including family members in some instances, are provided the opportunity for shelter and reunification with family in the United States.

Florida enjoys historically deep ties with the Bahamas and, by proximity, many Floridians have family in the Bahamas. While parts of the Bahamas endured sustained winds of 180 miles for almost two days, Florida watched and prepared for Dorian's landfall. Although Florida's east coast continues to experience high winds and storm surges, our state is fortunate to avoid a direct hit. Floridians are now eager to help their family and friends in the Bahamas.

We appreciate your attention to this urgent matter, and stand ready to work with your administration to assist the people and the government of the Bahamas as they recover and rebuild from this catastrophic storm.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Rick Scott
U.S. Senator

CC: The Honorable Mike Pompeo
The Honorable Kevin McAleenan
The Honorable William Barr