Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 29, 2025

Admiral Kevin E. Lunday
Acting Commandant
United States Coast Guard
2701 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE
Washington, DC 20593

The Honorable Lee Zeldin
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Paul Souza
Regional Director, Region 8
Exercising the Delegated Authority of the Director
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
5275 Leesburg Pike, 2N035
Falls Church, VA 22041

Edison Avilés Deliz
Chairman
Puerto Rico Energy Bureau
268 Ave. Muñoz Rivera
San Juan, PR 00918

Dear Admiral Lunday, Administrator Zeldin, Acting Director Souza, and Chairman Avilés Deliz:

We write to inquire about the recent decision to reject the installation of temporary power generation barges along the coast of Puerto Rico, which had been proposed to address the island's ongoing energy generation shortfall. As you know, the approval and implementation of such projects require close coordination among federal and local agencies.

According to a May 2025 news report, the U.S. Coast Guard, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Fish and Wildlife Service were engaged in discussions and ultimately decided to reject the installation of power generation barges along the shores of Salinas and Guayanilla[1]. We recognize that any energy infrastructure project must undergo thorough review to ensure compliance with federal and local standards, public safety protocols, and long-term planning goals. We also understand that decisions of this nature require careful coordination among agencies, especially when they involve potential coastal impacts.

[1] Descartadas las barcazas: gobierno recurrirá a generadores terrestres para intentar mitigar relevos de carga en verano - El Nuevo Día

Given the urgent need to enhance grid reliability in Puerto Rico, especially as the region enters hurricane season, we respectfully request additional information to better understand the agencies' evaluation process and decision-making:

1. What specific concerns prompted the rejection of barge installation in Puerto Rico? Which agency or entity initiated the decision?
2. Were third-party assessments, technical specifications, or risk analyses reviewed regarding the barges' performance in severe weather conditions?
3. What agencies or interagency groups were consulted during the evaluation process, and what were the key findings or points of consensus?
4. Are there any outstanding permitting, environmental compliance, or regulatory issues that must be resolved before the barges can be approved?
5. Did any private entity or Puerto Rico Government official communicate with you against permitting these barges?

Given the urgency of Puerto Rico's energy situation and the need to ensure accountability and transparency in the decision-making process, we respectfully request a response by June 12, 2025.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Pablo José Hernández
Member of Congress

Mark E. Green, MD
Member of Congress