

PRESS RELEASE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE INVESTS TO DEVELOP NATURAL DISASTER RESILIENT RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEM IN PUERTO RICO OPPORTUNITY ZONE

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WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross announced that the Department’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) is awarding a \$4.1 million grant to Fundación Comunitaria de Puerto Rico, San Juan, Puerto Rico, to install a 100 percent renewable energy system to support businesses in the municipality of Culebra, Puerto Rico. The project, to be located in a [Tax Cuts and Jobs Act](#) designated [Opportunity Zone](#), will be matched with \$1 million in local funds.

“The Trump Administration is committed to helping rebuild communities and businesses in Puerto Rico following the 2017 hurricanes,” said Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross. “The new renewable energy system will ensure that businesses in Culebra have the energy capacity to meet current needs and withstand future storms. The location of the project in a Tax Cuts and Jobs Act Opportunity Zone will also help attract additional investment through special tax incentives.”

“I am pleased to see how the Opportunity Zones in Puerto Rico are generating concrete benefits for areas in need such as Culebra, which I visited last Sunday,” said Rep. Jennifer Gonzalez-Colon.

“The Fundación Comunitaria project is vital to the particular challenges that Culebra faces. I appreciate President Trump and Secretary Wilbur Ross’ vision and commitment to support this project as an alternative for sustainability in Culebra as well as work in the economic development of the island.”

This project will develop solar power capability for the island of Culebra, creating a more robust and resilient energy system. This will lower the cost of doing business and provide consistent power in the event of another major hurricane. The solar panels will be installed in a way that will withstand future natural disasters.

This project is funded under the [Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 \(PL 115-123\)](#) (PDF), in which Congress appropriated to EDA \$600 million in additional [Economic Adjustment Assistance \(EAA\) Program](#) (PDF) funds for disaster relief and recovery as a result of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, wildfires and other calendar year 2017 natural disasters under the [Stafford Act](#).

The funding announced today goes to a Tax Cuts and Jobs Act designated Opportunity Zone, which provides special incentives for further private sector participation and development. Created by President Donald J. Trump’s Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, Opportunity Zone designations spur economic development by giving tax incentives to investors in economically-distressed communities nationwide. To learn more about the Opportunity Zone program, see the [Treasury Department resources page here](#). To learn more about the Department’s work in Opportunity Zones, read our [blog post](#).

About the U.S. Economic Development Administration (www.eda.gov)

The mission of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting competitiveness and preparing the nation's regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. An agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, EDA makes investments in economically distressed communities in order to create jobs

for U.S. workers, promote American innovation, and accelerate long-term sustainable economic growth.