

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 9086

To provide exemptions from certain Jones Act restrictions to vessels providing disaster relief to Puerto Rico for the areas affected by Hurricane Fiona.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. CASE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

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## A BILL

To provide exemptions from certain Jones Act restrictions to vessels providing disaster relief to Puerto Rico for the areas affected by Hurricane Fiona.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Puerto Rico Recovery  
5       Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. TEMPORARY EXEMPTIONS FROM JONES ACT RE-**  
2 **STRICTIONS FOR VESSELS PROVIDING HUR-**  
3 **RICANE RELIEF TO PUERTO RICO.**

4 (a) TEMPORARY EXEMPTION FOR PUERTO RICAN  
5 HURRICANE RELIEF.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding sections  
7 12112, 12103, and 55102 of title 46, United States  
8 Code, the Secretary of the department in which the  
9 Coast Guard is operating (referred to in this section  
10 as “the Secretary”) shall exempt a vessel from the  
11 requirements of such sections if the Secretary deter-  
12 mines that the owner or operator of the vessel has  
13 reasonably demonstrated that the exemption is need-  
14 ed to provide disaster relief to Puerto Rico for areas  
15 affected by Hurricane Fiona.

16 (2) PROCESS.—

17 (A) REQUEST.—An owner or operator of a  
18 vessel may request an exemption under para-  
19 graph (1), and the Secretary shall approve or  
20 deny the request by not later than 72 hours  
21 after the request is made.

22 (B) PUBLIC DENIAL STATEMENT.—In any  
23 case where the Secretary denies an exemption  
24 request under subparagraph (A), the Secretary  
25 shall promptly provide a public, detailed state-

1           ment regarding the reasoning and analysis for  
2           the denial.

3                   (C) DEEMED APPROVAL.—If the Secretary  
4           does not approve or deny a request according to  
5           the terms of subparagraph (A), the request  
6           shall be deemed to be approved.

7           (b) PERIOD OF EXEMPTION.—An exemption ap-  
8           proved under subsection (a) shall be valid until the earlier  
9           of—

10                   (1) the date that is 1 year after the date on  
11           which the exemption was approved; or

12                   (2) the date on which the major disaster de-  
13           clared by the President under section 401 of the  
14           Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency  
15           Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121) on September 22,  
16           2022 expires.

17           (c) APPLICABILITY.—This section, and any exemp-  
18           tion issued under this section, shall cease to have effect  
19           on the date described in subsection (b)(2).

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