



April 19, 2017

Administrator Scott Pruitt
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC, 20460

Secretary Tania Vázquez Rivera
Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNRA)
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
P.O. Box 366147
San Juan, PR 00936

Dear Administrator Pruitt and Secretary Vázquez Rivera,

On behalf of Puerto Rico Limpio, I write today to urge you to close the more than 70% of landfills in Puerto Rico that are in violation of local and federal law.

As you know, the landfill situation is toxic in Puerto Rico. In a letter to Puerto Rico Limpio late last year, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) acknowledged that 19 of the island's 29 landfills do not even meet the most basic federal requirements, making them illegal open dumps. But only 12 of those landfills are under any form of action to close and none of them have been fully enforced yet. The result has been an environmental disaster across the island that continues to this day.

In communities across Puerto Rico, such as Toa Baja, residents are forced to live next to the municipality's non-compliant landfill, which has been operating under a 2014 closure order from the EPA. Amazingly, trash is currently being dumped directly next to homes outside of an unlined cell. Residents now report health complications resulting from contaminated waste runoff draining into their living rooms and kitchens.

Recent actions taken by the EPA in Toa Alta and Santa Isabel are simply window dressing aimed at appeasing Puerto Rico Limpio and Congressional investigators. They are fake closures and judicial actions. For example, the EPA has documented that Toa Alta is operating "with an expired Commonwealth permit for operation," yet the Agency allows the landfill to continue receiving trash and the Puerto Rican Government finds it acceptable for the policies of the García Padilla administration to continue.

Administrator Pruitt and Secretary Vázquez Rivera, we urge you to work together to use your authority and close all of Puerto Rico's toxic landfills immediately. Administrative orders and court filings have been filed and ignored for over a decade with no consequences. Additional paperwork is not the answer; putting a lock on the gates of Puerto Rico's toxic landfills is.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'HJM', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

HIRAM J. TORRES MONTALVO
Co-Founder, Puerto Rico Limpio