



GOVERNOR OF PUERTO RICO  
Pedro R. Pierluisi

April 8, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
S-230, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
U.S. Senate  
S-221, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Republican Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, Republican Leader McConnell,  
and Republican Leader McCarthy:

As the Governor of the 3.2 million American citizens living in Puerto Rico, I write to urge you to respect my constituents' right to self-determination, which has been exercised three times during the last decade. On November 3, 2020, in a straightforward Yes or No vote, a clear majority of voters expressed -in no uncertain terms- that statehood is their preferred option to end over 100 years of colonialism. The November 3<sup>rd</sup> vote reconfirmed what my constituents had already expressed in the November 2012 plebiscite, in which a clear majority rejected the current political status and chose statehood as their preferred political status option.

I therefore ask that you respond to the will of the United States citizens of Puerto Rico with legislation that will initiate the admission of Puerto Rico as a state. Any proposal that would prolong a territorial status that has been flatly rejected by the voters in the guise of promoting a complicated and superfluous process of self-determination that ignores our people's vote must be rejected.



GOVERNOR OF PUERTO RICO  
Pedro R. Pierluisi

The territorial relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States has been the subject of extensive study and debate. It is time for Congress to begin the admission process that Puerto Rico's voters clearly favor.

The appropriate response to the American citizens of Puerto Rico is the enactment of H.R. 1522, "The Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act" sponsored by Representative Darren Soto and Resident Commissioner Gonzalez-Colon, and S. 780 in the Senate sponsored by Senator Martin Heinrich. Under this legislation Congress would set forth the terms and conditions under which Puerto Rico would be admitted as a state of the Union, and the voters of Puerto Rico would be given the opportunity to accept or reject such admission in a final referendum before it is proclaimed.

When you consider H.R.1522, I ask you to think about how your own constituents would feel if their full rights as Americans were still in question after being citizens of the United States for well over a century and after voting for statehood. How would they feel if the response from Congress was to set aside their expressions of self-determination with legislation that would delay the end of their territorial status?

Your support for H.R. 1522 and S. 780. will reaffirm the most sacred principles upon which our system of government was founded and will strengthen our democracy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pierluisi".

April 12, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Republican Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Republican Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, and Leaders McCarthy and McConnell:

We, the undersigned legal and constitutional scholars, write to express our strong opposition to the Puerto Rico Self-Determination Act, H.R. 2070, and its Senate companion bill, S. 865, and to register our equally strong support for the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act, H.R. 1522, and its Senate companion bill, S. 780.

Like all Americans, we support self-determination. But unlike the supporters of the Puerto Rico Self-Determination Act, we believe that genuine self-determination requires the United States to offer Puerto Ricans a real choice. By “real,” we mean *constitutional* and *non-territorial*. Puerto Rico’s self-determination options must be *constitutional*, for the obvious reason that neither Congress nor Puerto Rico has the power to implement an unconstitutional option. And they must be *non-territorial*, because a territorial option is not self-determination.

There are two, *and only two*, real self-determination options for Puerto Rico: statehood and independence. Yet the Puerto Rico Self-Determination Act defies constitutional reality by calling upon Puerto Ricans to define other non-territorial options. *There are no other non-territorial options*. For many decades, advocates of “commonwealth” status argued that it was non-territorial. They argued that when Puerto Rico made the transition to commonwealth status in 1952, it ceased to be a U.S. territory, became a separate sovereign, and entered into a mutually binding compact with the United States. But they were wrong. Quite simply, Congress does not have the power to create a permanent union between Puerto Rico and the United States except by admitting Puerto Rico into statehood. Lest there be any doubt, the U.S. Supreme Court has repeatedly and recently refuted the controversial “compact theory.” In *Puerto Rico v. Sanchez Valle* (2016), the Court ended seven decades of debilitating debate over the question of whether Puerto Rico’s commonwealth status created a permanent union between two separate sovereigns with an unequivocal “no”: as the Court made clear, Puerto Rico is, and always has been, a U.S. territory, and Congress retains plenary power to govern the island under the Territory Clause of the Constitution (Art. IV, §3, cl.2). And in *Financial Oversight and Management Board of Puerto Rico v. Aurelius Investment LLC*. (2020), the Court went on to explain that Congress’s creation of a federal board with substantial powers over Puerto Rico’s local government was a permissible exercise of Congress’s plenary power over a U.S. territory. In short, as long as Puerto Rico is neither a state of the Union nor an independent nation, it will remain a territory. By inviting Puerto Ricans to define non-territorial options other than statehood or independence, the inaptly named Puerto Rico Self-Determination Act deserves its purported goal by perpetuating the pernicious myth that such options exist. They do not.

Despite longstanding political division within Puerto Rico, Puerto Ricans have long shared an overwhelming consensus on two key points: They reject territorial status and they wish to remain U.S. citizens. But while both statehood and independence would fulfill the goal of self-determination, only one of those options would guarantee U.S. citizenship: statehood. Last November, in an unmistakable effort to determine their political future, a clear majority of Puerto Ricans voted “yes” in their own referendum on statehood. Now that Puerto Ricans have publicly and officially asked for statehood, it is time for the United States officially to offer it. The Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act does just that.

Proceeding respectfully, cautiously, and pragmatically, the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act responds to the November referendum with an offer of statehood and sets the terms for admission, but it makes admission contingent on a *second* referendum in which Puerto Ricans would ratify their choice. Were they to do so, the President would issue a proclamation admitting Puerto Rico as a state within one year of the vote. If they were to reject statehood, then the island would remain a territory with the option to pursue sovereignty at any time in the future—so the Act does not force statehood on Puerto Rico in any way. In other words, the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act respects the result of Puerto Rico’s referendum by responding with concrete action, while ensuring that Puerto Ricans have the first and last word on their future.

In the 123 years since the United States annexed Puerto Rico, Congress has never offered Puerto Ricans the choice to become a state. Instead, the United States has allowed Puerto Rico to languish indefinitely as a U.S. territory, subjecting its residents to U.S. laws while denying them voting representation in the government that makes those laws. We strongly support a congressional offer of statehood to Puerto Rico, and we urge Congress to pass the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act immediately.

Signed,\*

*\*University affiliations listed for identification purposes only.*

Jack M. Balkin  
Knight Professor of Constitutional Law and the First Amendment  
Yale Law School

Christopher P. Banks  
Professor, Political Science  
Kent State University

Evelyn Benvenuti Toro  
Professor of Law  
Inter American University of Puerto Rico School of Law

Jessica Bulman-Pozen  
Betts Professor of Law  
Faculty Co-Director, Center for Constitutional Governance  
Columbia Law School

Kathleen Burch  
Professor of Law  
Atlanta's John Marshall Law School

Guy-Uriel E. Charles  
Edward and Ellen Schwarzman Professor of Law  
Duke Law School

Erwin Chemerinsky  
Dean and Jesse H. Choper Distinguished Professor of Law  
U.C. Berkeley School of Law

Cornell W. Clayton  
C.O. Johnson Distinguished Professor of Political Science  
Director, Thomas S. Foley Institute for Public Service and Public Policy  
Washington State University

David S. Cohen  
Professor of Law  
Thomas R. Kline School of Law  
Drexel University

Andrés L. Córdova  
Professor of Law  
Inter American University of Puerto Rico School of Law

Erin F. Delaney  
Professor of Law  
Northwestern Pritzker School of Law

Walter Dellinger  
Douglas Maggs Emeritus Professor of Law  
Duke University

Carlos Díaz Olivo  
Professor of Law  
University of Puerto Rico School of Law

Michael C. Dorf  
Robert S. Stevens Professor of Law  
Cornell Law School

Stephen M. Feldman  
Jerry W. Housel/Carl F. Arnold Distinguished Professor of Law  
and Adjunct Professor of Political Science  
University of Wyoming

Martin S. Flaherty  
Leitner Family Professor of International Law  
Fordham Law School  
and Visiting Professor  
School of International and Public Affairs  
Princeton University

Barry Friedman  
Jacob D. Fuchsberg Professor of Law  
New York University School of Law

Luis Fuentes-Rohwer  
Professor of Law, Class of 1950 Herman B. Wells Endowed Professor  
Maurer School of Law  
Indiana University

Lauren Gilbert  
Professor of Law  
St. Thomas University College of Law

Leslie F. Goldstein  
Judge Hugh M. Morris Professor Emerita of Political Science and International Relations  
University of Delaware

David Golove  
Hiller Family Foundation Professor of Law  
New York University School of Law

Mark A. Graber  
University System of Maryland Regents Professor  
University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law

Jonathan Hafetz  
Professor of Law  
Seton Hall University School of Law

Helen Hershkoff  
Herbert M. and Svetlana Wachtell Professor of Constitutional Law and Civil Liberties  
New York University School of Law

Gary J. Jacobsohn  
H. Malcolm Macdonald Professor of Constitutional and Comparative Law  
University of Texas at Austin

Randall L. Kennedy  
Michael R. Klein Professor of Law  
Harvard Law School

J. Andrew Kent  
Professor of Law and John D. Feerick Research Chair  
Fordham Law School

Mark R. Killenbeck  
Wylie H. Davis Distinguished Professor of Law  
University of Arkansas

Stephen R. Lazarus  
Associate Professor of Law  
Cleveland-Marshall College of Law

Lawrence Lessig  
Roy L. Furman Professor of Law and Leadership  
Harvard Law School

Sanford V. Levinson  
W. St. John Garwood and W. St. John Garwood, Jr. Centennial Chair and  
Professor of Government  
University of Texas at Austin

Ira C. Lupu  
F. Elwood & Eleanor Davis Professor of Law Emeritus  
George Washington University Law School

Martha Minow  
300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary University Professor  
Harvard University

Samuel Moyn  
Henry R. Luce Professor of Jurisprudence  
Yale Law School

Christina D. Ponsa-Kraus  
George Welwood Murray Professor of Legal History  
Columbia Law School

David Pozen  
Vice Dean for Intellectual Life and Charles Keller Beekman Professor of Law  
Columbia Law School

Richard Primus  
Theodore J. St. Antoine Collegiate Professor  
The University of Michigan Law School

Kermit Roosevelt  
Professor of Law  
University of Pennsylvania Law School

Lawrence Sager  
Alice Jane Drysdell Sheffield Regents Chair  
University of Texas at Austin

Rogers M. Smith  
Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor of Political Science  
University of Pennsylvania

Girardeau A. Spann  
James & Catherine Denny Professor of Law  
Georgetown University Law Center

Kate Stith  
Lafayette S. Foster Professor of Law  
Yale Law School

Geoffrey R. Stone  
Edward H. Levi Distinguished Professor of Law  
The University of Chicago



Nelson Tebbe  
Jane M.G. Foster Professor of Law  
Cornell Law School

Laurence H. Tribe  
Carol M. Loeb University Professor and  
Professor of Constitutional Law *Emeritus*  
Harvard Law School

Stephen I. Vladeck  
Charles Alan Wright Chair in Federal Courts  
University of Texas School of Law

Kenji Yoshino  
Chief Justice Earl Warren Professor of Constitutional Law  
New York University School of Law



Democratic Party of Puerto Rico



March 18, 2021

**The Honorable Raúl Grijalva**  
Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources

**The Honorable Bruce Westerman**  
Ranking Member, House Committee on Natural Resources

**The Honorable Joe Manchin**  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources

**The Honorable John Barrasso**  
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources

Dear Chairman Grijalva, Ranking Member Westerman, Chairman Manchin, Ranking Member Barrasso:

For over one-hundred years, the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico have been disenfranchised in federal elections and subjected to unequal treatment across federal programs. Last November, voters stood up to change that when an absolute majority of 53% demanded statehood in a locally sponsored referendum. The Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act, H.R. 1522 and S. 780, directly respond to that mandate, and we urge you to support it and help get it approved as soon as possible.

Puerto Rico's referendum was historic because it is the first time that statehood received unquestionable majority support on the island with a simple "YES" or "NO" vote. The 117th Congress is therefore presented with a unique opportunity to make history and put an end to America's inherently colonial rule over Puerto Rico, which runs counter to America's values of democracy, equal justice under the law, and government by the consent of the governed.

We recognize there are some in Congress, such as Rep. Nydia Velázquez (NY) and Sen. Robert Menendez (NJ), who oppose statehood for Puerto Rico and have completely ignored the results of the referendum held last November. Today, they will be submitting a counter-proposal, the Puerto Rico Self-Determination Act (PRSDA), which has faced criticism from representatives of all status options.

The most significant concern, across party lines, is that the PRSDA is ultimately non-binding. Under the bill, Congress would be under no obligation to implement whichever status option is chosen by the convention and later voted on by the electorate. This would represent a huge setback for voters in Puerto Rico who have engaged in multiple acts of self-determination over the last decade and have shown, with increasing clarity, that Puerto Rico's voters reject the current territory status and favor statehood above all non-territory options.

Beyond the will of the people on the island, however, Puerto Ricans stateside also favor statehood by wide margins. For example, recent polls show 81% of Puerto Rican residents in Florida and 69% of those in New York favor the admission of the island as a state. A majority of Americans have also supported the idea for decades according to Gallup. This is a settled issue on the island as well as across the Nation, and Congress has a moral obligation to act.

The only legislative option that respects the will of the people of Puerto Rico, and ensures a binding process of self-determination is H.R. 1522 & S. 780, the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act. By offering statehood, stipulating the terms of admission, and requiring a ratification vote, Congress would finally open the door to full equality and democracy for the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico while leaving the ultimate choice in their hands. If a majority opposes statehood at that point, then the island would remain a territory with the capacity to pursue independence or free association through the procedural mechanism of their choice, including a status convention. Congress has a moral obligation to let the people of Puerto Rico decide their own self-determination process.



Our organizations represent the majority of voters in Puerto Rico, as well as their allies stateside. We believe it's time to put an end to the dysfunctional, outdated, and undemocratic territory status to which Puerto Rico has been subjected. We call on Congress to open the door to full enfranchisement and equality for our fellow U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico by supporting and passing the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act. America can and must do better.

Sincerely,

George H. Laws García  
Executive Director  
Puerto Rico Statehood Council

Annabel Guillén  
President  
Igualdad, Futuro Seguro

Irma R. Rodríguez  
President  
Puerto Rico Escogió Estadidad

Kathianie Banchs  
President  
Young Professionals for Puerto Rico Statehood

José Cabrera  
Chair  
Puerto Rico Star Project

Hon. César Méndez-Otero  
President  
Coalición Pro Derechos E Igualdad

Dr. Zayira Jordan  
Founder  
Frente Estadista

Jesús Pérez  
Executive Director  
52 States of America

Dr. José Vicente  
President  
Alianza Pastoral por Puerto Rico

Hon. Iván D. Hernández  
Chairman  
Consejo de Ex Alcaldes de Puerto Rico

Harry Márquez Rodríguez  
President  
Organización de Pensionados Estadistas

Hon. Kenneth McClintock  
President  
Puerto Rico Equality Forum

Hon. José Aponte-Hernandez  
Executive Director  
Instituto Misión Estadista

Brig. Gen. Víctor Pérez (Ret.)  
Director  
Organización de Veteranos Progresistas

Luis Dávila Pernas  
National Committeeman  
Democratic Party of Puerto Rico

Ricardo Aponte  
Executive Director  
Republican Party of Puerto Rico

Gabriela M. Medina Marrero  
President  
Young Democrats of Puerto Rico

Josué Rivera  
Chairman  
Puerto Rico Young Republican Federation

Hon. Luis Berrios-Amadeo  
Former Shadow U.S. Representative (I-PR)  
Puerto Rico Statehood Commission

Frankie Martínez-Blanco  
Former Associate Member  
President's Task Force on Puerto Rico's Status

**Demócratas  
Activaos**



**FRENTE ESTADISTA**



Hon. Milagros López  
President  
Votar es Poder

Ken Oliver  
Director  
United States Council for Puerto Rico  
Statehood

Elvin Méndez-Rosa  
President  
Movimiento Revolución Estadista

Luis Matos  
President  
Renacer Ideológico Estadista

Jorge I. Rodríguez Feliciano  
President  
Puertorriqueños Pro Unión Permanente

Wilfredo Rivera  
President  
Impulso 51/Estado Igualdad



Joel Salgado  
Administrator  
La Suprema Definición

Ricardo Marrero Passapera  
President  
Ahora Sí Puerto Rico



Gerardo Ramirez  
Director  
Movimineto Estadista Puertorriqueño

Javier de la Luz  
Founder  
Boricuas con Kamala



Ruth Marrero  
President  
Senior 51

José A. Correa Alvarado  
Outreach Coordinator  
We The People



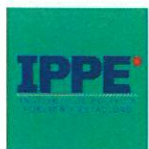
Alexander Acevedo  
Spokesperson  
Demócratas Activaos

Hon. Roberto Lefranc Fortuño  
President  
Juventud Estadista de Guaynabo



Emilio Ruiz  
Lead Organizer  
Puerto Rico Statehood Supporters of  
Florida & USA

Kemuel Delgado  
Founder & Lead Organizer  
Junta Estadista de Puerto Rico



Dess Soto  
Coordinator  
Coalicion Pro Derechos E Igualdad  
PR51 Florida Chapter

Margarita Vives  
President  
Coalicion Pro Derechos E Igualdad  
PR51 Guaynabo City Chapter



Elizabeth Reyes  
Spokesperson  
Puerto Rico Equality Coalition,  
Massachussetts Chapter

Eric Cardona  
Spokesperson  
Puerto Rico Equality Coalition,  
Florida Chapter



Doralice Matta  
 Founder & President  
 Las Avispas Azules

Pedro Luis Hernandez Gomez  
 Lead Orgnizer  
 Bateador Estadista



Edgardo Vargas Moya  
 Spokesperson  
 Isabelinos por la Igualdad

Iván G. González  
 Editor & Chief  
 Inside The Colony



Reina Davis Pérez  
 President  
 Statehood Educational Group

Nilka Marrero Garcia, M.Div  
 President  
 Misión Solidaria de Amor



Kevin Romero  
 President  
 Instituto de Política Pública y Estadidad

Benny Ortiz  
 President & CEO  
 Los Latigos Azules



Francisco "Pompy" González  
 Presidente  
 Estado PRUSA

Cristóbal Berrios  
 President  
 Acción Civil Para El Status

Samuel Rodríguez  
 CEO  
 Borinqueneers Congressional Gold  
 Medal Ceremony National Committee



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



José F. Aponte-Hernández  
Former Speaker  
Representative at Large

April 12, 2021

Via e-mail: [raul.grijalva@mail.house.gov](mailto:raul.grijalva@mail.house.gov)  
[Nancy.Locke@mail.house.gov](mailto:Nancy.Locke@mail.house.gov)

Hon. Raúl Grijalva  
Chairman  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. 2302 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**STATEMENT by José F. Aponte-Hernández, Former Speaker and Representative at Large, Puerto Rico House of Representatives, on H.R. 1522, before the Committee on Natural Resources of the U.S. House of Representatives.**

Thank you to the Committee leadership for convening this hearing and allowing me to speak in support of H.R. 1522.

I am a former Speaker and current member of the Puerto Rico House of Representatives. More importantly, I am an American citizen since birth who has been denied his most fundamental democratic rights by virtue of living in a U.S. territory. My statement before this honorable body supporting H.R.1522 pertains to both of these inseparable aspects of my reality. It is also backed by the freely expressed will of a majority of Puerto Rico residents and supported by more than two hundred and fifty (250) years of philosophical and legal precedent that serve as the foundation for this Nation.

My fellow citizens on the Island have defended these values with their blood, sweat, and tears. Even our veterans are deprived of equal and dignified treatment after fulfilling their obligations abroad, after fighting elsewhere for the fundamental rights they lack. I have first-hand knowledge of these challenges and inequalities. My father and brother are veterans, the former of the Second World War and the latter from the Vietnam War.

This information is not novel. One hundred twenty years have created a formidable record on which this congress should feel obliged. We have endured over a century of self-serving discriminatory and contradictory legal interpretations and constant rule changes contrary to basic democratic principles and the very concept of civil rights.

I respectfully must point out that this Congress and this Committee are not oblivious to the injuries perpetrated but have been one of its leading promoters, either by action or omission. Hundreds of public hearings such as this one have been held. The same arguments and facts are rehashed every couple of years without concrete steps. This inertia is the best available evidence of the inherent disadvantages of our political condition.

Political discourse is only transcendent when it is accompanied by action. When principles are treated as a catchphrase, we must not forget that they lose their value and become mere propaganda. Thus, in its analysis, this political body must also face its obligations and decide its current and prospective roles in upholding this Nation's ideals. It must choose between the usual comforts of "neutrality" and the tensions associated with fulfilling a demand for justice.

As the public record reflects, on election day, November 3, 2020, the American citizens of Puerto Rico were presented with a question identical to that used by former territories admitted as a state: *Should Puerto Rico be immediately admitted into the union as a state?* The result reiterated the public expression on multiple previous electoral events (See *Appendixes A-1/A-3*). **A majority of the people of Puerto Rico supported statehood.** Specifically, and as certified by the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission: The YES option received 655,505 votes which amount to 52.52%, and the NO alternative received 592,671 or 47.48% of the votes.

Democracy and the political process have clear and specific rules of engagement and interpretation. These are the cornerstones of the social contract. Under our voting system, the votes duly emitted are the ones that are counted. The majority of those is recognized as the people's will. Otherwise, legitimacy and stability are impossible to achieve. That is democracy; that is the rule of law. This exercise is much simpler in a case like the plebiscite held on Tuesday with a well-crafted question and simple (yes/no) alternatives.

Of course, there is always a segment of the political opposition who resort to after-the-fact interpretations, rule changes, and political spin in a way that discredits the people's will. Demagoguery under the guise of objectivity is nothing new.

Some have succumbed to an easy out in their analysis of our aspirations. Some feel that financial stability is a precondition to a change in political status. Their position fails to recognize the very nature of the problem. The total disenfranchisement and unequal treatment of the people of Puerto Rico are the cause and not the effect of our current socioeconomic condition. The impact of a territorial system, which deprives American citizens of their fundamental civil rights, permeates all aspects of our lives. We hear

every day the public cry for equal treatment as American citizens, but what does that mean? It is impossible to address the individual rights issue without simultaneously addressing the collective structural issue.

Ignoring the impact of political subordination and unequal treatment devalues civil rights and democratic principles to the point that it renders them subsidiary to financial or fiscal constraints. This argument is reminiscent of poll taxes, where financial solvency was a prerequisite to the exercise of voting rights. It seems as if some Members of Congress keep blurring and moving the "finish line" to avoid its obligations towards the American citizens of Puerto Rico.

Others have resorted to encumbering the process so that their positions prevail regardless of the people's will.

A false equivalence has been created between two legislative projects (H.R. 1522 and H.R. 2070) dealing with the Puerto Rico status issue that must be questioned and challenged. Let there be no doubt, these two projects that differ in intent, philosophy, and legitimacy. However, their joint discussion pretends to give the impression that both positions are equally situated. That there is no majority expression. This action is akin to a legislative poison pill whose victims are the people of Puerto Rico and only benefits a minority expressly rejected by the people of Puerto Rico. Congress cannot make feasible a process that reinforces colonial theories and recriminations.

At the helm of this legislative strategy are congresswomen Nydia Velazquez and Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez of New York, who historically have been affiliated to the parties who promoted the losing proposition in the plebiscite. We respect them and are aware of all congressmen and women's authority to file bills that transcend their districts' limits. However, we reject using their authority as a subterfuge to impose their will against a clear, direct, and forceful expression of the people. Regardless of their ancestry, they do not represent the American citizens of Puerto Rico; they represent districts in New York. Unlike Jennifer Gonzalez-Colón (proponent of H.R. 1522), who was elected by the majority of the voters in Puerto Rico (512, 697 votes), the distinguished congresswomen from New York have never received a single vote in Puerto Rico. Let there be no doubt, the weight of their opinions stems from the Territorial Clause and not from the freely and democratically stated will of the people on the Island. Their opinions are not representative of the views of a majority of my fellow citizens in the Islands but rather an imposition from New York. That is precisely the very definition of colonialism.

Besides the vote's outcome, it is essential to recognize that this majority resulted from an open process. As seen from the official filings before the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission (*See Appendixes B-1/B-3*), all major political parties in the Island expressed an official position regarding the proposed alternatives. One of the groups that actively campaigned in favor of the NO option was an organization named "Boricuas Unidos en la Diaspora."



One of its leaders was former governor Anibal Acevedo-Vilá, who was also the resident commissioner candidate for the main opposition party (Popular Democratic Party) and whose candidacy was decisively rejected by the people of Puerto Rico in these past elections. Attached you will find a copy of his plebiscite campaign ad for that group (See *Appendixes C-1/C-4, more information available at [https://m.facebook.com/watch/?v=730377810883381&\\_rdr](https://m.facebook.com/watch/?v=730377810883381&_rdr)*). Who were among the other active participants in this group?). Not surprisingly, congresswoman Nydia Velazquez and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and former congressman Luis Gutierrez. **Precisely, the architects and promoters of H.R. 2070.**

Similarly, and as expected, newly created "citizen" organizations pretend to flood the legislative record with alternative and discredited theories. Some of these "new groups" serve as the alter egos of politicians who the people of Puerto Rico expressly rejected. Precisely those who actively campaigned in favor of the NO option in the plebiscite.

H.R. 1522's legitimacy was not manufactured politically, behind closed doors, but is the product of democracy itself, by the voice of our people. It represents the aspirations of the majority, those who have to suffer from its implications.

It is a contradiction to proclaim the virtues of democracy and then work hard to hinder it. Consistency and credibility are intertwined. No amount of political spin can discredit democracy and the fact that the American citizens of Puerto Rico demand statehood. The status issue is not a matter of personal loyalties but legitimacy. We, the people of Puerto Rico, have spoken.

You have a historic opportunity to help rectify the state of structural disadvantage that has placed millions of American citizens in a subordinate position. The United States is a nation founded on principles of justice and the dignity of all. Statehood would not only be consistent with these principles, and thus, in the best interests of the Nation, but the recognition of our will.

Congress has a moral, political, and legal obligation to resolve Puerto Rico's political status. Our Island has voted and opted for Statehood three times in the last decade. Accordingly, I strongly support H.R. 1522 and urge all members of this Committee to recommend its approval.

Respectfully,



Jose F. Aponle-Hernandez



STATE ELECTIONS COMMISSION OF PUERTO RICO

**FINAL CERTIFICATION AMENDED  
PLEBISCITE FOR THE FINAL DEFINITION OF  
THE PUERTO RICO'S POLITICAL STATUS**

**WHEREAS:** The *Law for the Final Definition of the Puerto Rico's Political Status*, Puerto Rico Act No. 51-2020, was approved "to create the rules for a plebiscite that will be held on November 3, 2020 to resolve a century-old problem of Puerto Rico's status as a territory of the United States of America; to guarantee the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico their right to self-determination and their right to demand the Federal Government for redress of grievances; provide the conditions for conducting this plebiscite pursuant to Public Law 113-76 of 2014 and the pertinent congressional reports, House Report 113-171 and House Report 116-101; to appropriate funds; and for other related purposes."

**WHEREAS:** The *Law for the Final Definition of the Puerto Rico's Political Status*, Puerto Rico Act No. 51-2020, establishes on its Article 1.3 (h), as Public Policy: "After more than a century of being at a disadvantage due to our territorial status, and after the conclusive result of the Plebiscite of 2012 in which the current territorial status was rejected, Congress and the President approved an appropriation of \$2.5 million in the "Consolidated Appropriations Act," Pub. L. 113-76 (2014), to fund an "objective, nonpartisan education campaign for the plebiscite voters, about the alternative options that would resolve Puerto Rico's future political status." This "Law to Define Puerto Rico's Final Political Status" is consistent with the parameters established by the aforementioned Federal Act and the statements made in congressional House Report 113-171 and House Report 116-101"

**WHEREAS:** Article 5.9 (e) of the *Law for the Final Definition of the Puerto Rico's Political Status*, Puerto Rico Act No. 51-2020, establishes that "The status option printed on the ballot that is favored by a majority of one hundred percent (100%) of the votes defined as "Adjudicated Ballots", shall be certified by the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission as the winning option and the legitimate expression of self-determination of a majority of voters to resolve Puerto Rico's territorial status."

**THEREFORE:** According to Article 5.9 (e) of the *Law for the Final Definition of the Puerto Rico's Political Status*, Puerto Rico Act No. 51-2020, the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission certifies the final result of the Plebiscite for the *Final Definition of the Puerto Rico's Political Status*, held on November 3, 2020:

**QUESTION:** Should Puerto Rico be admitted immediately into the Union as a State?

**POLITICAL STATUS FIGURE VOTES PERCENT PREFERENCE  
STATEHOOD**

**YES**



655,505

52.52 %

**NO**



592,671

47.48 %

Enacted in accordance with Article 5.9 (f) of the *Law for the Final Definition of the Puerto Rico's Political Status*, Puerto Rico Act No. 51-2020.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, on February 12, 2021.

  
**FRANCISCO J. ROSADO-COLOMER**  
Chairman

**I CERTIFY:** That on this same date I have sent copy of this certification to the Governor of Puerto Rico, to the Resident Commissioner in Washington DC, the presiding officers of the Legislative Assembly, the U.S. President, the presiding officers of Congress, and the U.S. Attorney General, in accordance with Article 5.9 (f) of the *Act to Define Puerto Rico's Ultimate Political Status*, Act No. 51 of May 16, 2020.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico on February 12, 2021.

  
**ROLANDO CUEVAS COLÓN**  
Secretary





PUERTO RICO STATE ELECTIONS COMMISS.

FINAL CERTIFICATION  
PLEBISCITE FOR THE IMMEDIATE DECOLONIZATION OF PUERTO RICO

Pursuant to Article X, Section 3 of the *Puerto Rico Immediate Decolonization Act*, Act Num. 7 of February 3, 2017, as amended, the Puerto Rico State Election Commission certifies the final result of the Plebiscite for the immediate Decolonization of Puerto Rico held on June 11, 2017.

These results constitute the legitimate expression of self-determination of a majority of United States citizens of Puerto Rico. Furthermore, these results meet the conditions imposed by the U.S. Congress and the President of the United States upon the approval of Public Law 113-76, 'Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014'; the corresponding Congressional report on said Federal law, and the position of the U.S. Department of Justice as stated on April 13, 2017. Any other interpretation of these results would be contrary to the rights of a majority of United States citizens of Puerto Rico who cast a valid vote in accordance with the law, and the case law of the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico.

STATUS ALTERNATIVE	DEFINITION	FIGURE	VOTES	PERCENT
Statehood	With my vote, I reiterate my request to the Federal Government to immediately begin the process for the decolonization of Puerto Rico with the admission of Puerto Rico as a state of the United States of America. I am aware that the result of this request for Statehood would entail equal rights and duties with the other states, and the permanent union of Puerto Rico with the United States of America. I am also aware that my vote claiming Statehood means my support to all efforts towards the admission of Puerto Rico as a state of the Union, and to all state or federal legislation aimed at establishing equal conditions, congressional representation and the presidential vote for the American citizens of Puerto Rico.		508,862	97.13%
Free Association/ Independence	With my vote, I make the initial request to the Federal Government to begin the process of the decolonization through: (1) Free Association: Puerto Rico should adopt a status outside of the Territory Clause of the Constitution of the United States that recognizes the sovereignty of the People of Puerto Rico as a complete an unencumbered independence. The Free Association would be based on a free and voluntary political association, the specific terms of which shall be agreed upon between the United States and Puerto Rico as sovereign nations. Such agreement would provide the scope of the jurisdictional powers that the People of Puerto Rico agree to confer to the United States and retain all other jurisdictional powers and authorities; (2) Proclamation of Independence, I demand that the United States Government, in the exercise of its power to dispose of territory, recognize the national sovereignty of Puerto Rico as a completely independent nation and that the United States Congress enact the necessary legislation to initiate the negotiation and transition to the independent nation of Puerto Rico. My vote for Independence also represents my claim to the rights, duties, powers, and prerogatives of independent and democratic republics, my support of Puerto Rican citizenship, and a "Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation" between Puerto Rico and the United States after the transition process.		7,981	1.52%
Current Territorial Status	With my vote, I express my wish that Puerto Rico remains, as it is today, subject to the powers of the Congress and subject to the Territory Clause of the United States Constitution that in its Article IV, Section 3 states: "The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State".		7,048	1.35%

Therefore, it is the legitimate expression of a majority of United States citizens of Puerto Rico that a process of transition into, and proclamation of Statehood immediately begins.

REGISTER AND NOTIFY: In San Juan, Puerto Rico on August 17, 2017.

MARÍA D. SANTIAGO RODRÍGUEZ  
Acting Chairwoman

I CERTIFY:

That on this same date I have sent copy of this certification to the Honorable Ricardo Rosselló Nevares, Governor of Puerto Rico, to the Resident Commissioner in Washington DC, to the Legislative Assembly, and the Secretary of State of Puerto Rico.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico on August 17, 2017.

ÁNGEL L. ROSA BARRIOS  
Secretary



A-3



**CERTIFICACIÓN DE RESULTADOS OFICIALES  
CONSULTA DE ESTATUS POLÍTICO DE PUERTO RICO  
-PRIMERA PREGUNTA-**

De conformidad con la Ley para Disponer la Celebración de una Consulta Sobre el Estatus Político de Puerto Rico, Ley Núm. 283 - 2011 y por los Artículos 10.009 y 11.010 del Código Electoral de Puerto Rico para el Siglo XXI, Ley Núm. 78 de 1 de junio de 2011, según enmendada, la Comisión Estatal de Elecciones informa y certifica los resultados oficiales de la Primera Pregunta de la Consulta Sobre el Estatus Político de Puerto Rico del 6 de noviembre de 2012.

**CONDICIÓN POLÍTICA TERRITORIAL ACTUAL**

**RESULTADOS ISLA**

<b>NO</b>	970,910	53.97%
<b>SÍ</b>	828,077	46.03%

**TOTAL: 1,798,987**

OTROS	
EN BLANCO	67,267
PROTESTADAS Y NO ADJUDICADAS	12,948
PARTICIPACIÓN	
INSCRITOS UNIDADES REPORTADAS	2,402,941
VOTANTES SEGÚN LISTA	1,878,989
PARTICIPACIÓN	78.19%
TOTAL DE INSCRITOS	2,402,941

COLEGIOS REPORTADOS: 7,755 DE 7,755 PARA UN 100.00%

En esta certificación, la Comisión Estatal de Elecciones declarará los resultados oficiales para la Primera Pregunta de la Consulta Sobre el Estatus Político de Puerto Rico del 6 de noviembre de 2012.

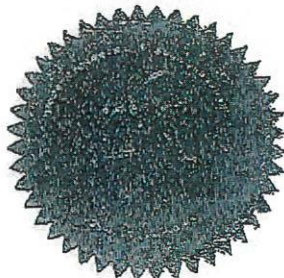
**REGÍSTRESE Y NOTIFÍQUESE:**

En San Juan, Puerto Rico a 31 de diciembre de 2012.

*[Signature]*  
Medina J. Conty Pérez  
Presidente

**CERTIFICO:** Que en esta misma fecha he enviado copia de esta certificación al Honorable Lula G. Fortuño Bursel; Gobernador de Puerto Rico.

En San Juan, Puerto Rico a 31 de diciembre de 2012



*[Signature]*  
Walter Vélez Martínez  
Secretario



**CERTIFICACIÓN DE RESULTADOS OFICIALES  
CONSULTA DE ESTATUS POLÍTICO DE PUERTO RICO  
-SEGUNDA PREGUNTA-**

De conformidad con la Ley para Disponer la Celebración de una Consulta Sobre el Estatus Político de Puerto Rico, Ley Núm. 283 - 2011 y por los Artículos 10.009 y 11.010 del Código Electoral de Puerto Rico para el Siglo XXI, Ley Núm. 78 de 1 de junio de 2011, según enmendada, la Comisión Estatal de Elecciones informa y certifica los resultados oficiales de la Segunda Pregunta de la Consulta Sobre el Estatus Político de Puerto Rico del 6 de noviembre de 2012.

**OPCIONES NO TERRITORIALES  
RESULTADOS ISLA**

ESTADIDAD	834,191	61.16%
ESTADO LIBRE ASOCIADO SOBERANO	454,768	33.34%
INDEPENDENCIA	74,895	5.49%
<b>TOTAL: 1,363,854</b>		

<b>OTROS</b>	
EN BLANCO	432,604
PROTESTADAS Y NO ADJUDICADAS	19,744
<b>PARTICIPACIÓN</b>	
INSCRITOS UNIDADES REPORTADAS	2,402,941
VOTANTES SEGÚN LISTA	1,878,969
PARTICIPACIÓN	78.19%
TOTAL DE INSCRITOS	2,402,941

COLEGIOS REPORTADOS: 7,755 DE 7,755 PARA UN 100.00%

En esta certificación, la Comisión Estatal de Elecciones declarará los resultados oficiales para la Segunda Pregunta de la Consulta Sobre el Estatus Político de Puerto Rico del 6 de noviembre de 2012.

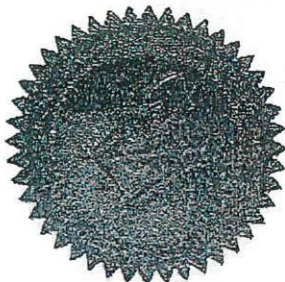
**REGÍSTRESE Y NOTIFIQUESE:**

En San Juan, Puerto Rico a 31 de diciembre de 2012.

  
 Héctor J. Conty Velez  
 Presidente

**CERTIFICO:** Que en esta misma fecha he enviado copia de esta certificación al Honorable Luis G. Fortuño Bursat, Gobernador de Puerto Rico.

En San Juan, Puerto Rico a 31 de diciembre de 2012



  
 Walter Velez Martínez  
 Secretario



COMISION ESTATAL DE ELECCIONES DE PUERTO RICO  
OFICINA DEL PRESIDENTE

9 de junio de 2020

Lcdo. Lind O. Merle Feliciano  
Comisionado Electoral PPD

SOLICITUD DE CERTIFICACIÓN PPD EN REPRESENTACIÓN ALTERNATIVA NO

Estimado Lcdo. Merle:


Vista, su carta de 3 de junio de 2020, dirigida a este servidor, le informo que no tengo nada que proveer. La CEE acordó por unanimidad, hace once (11) días, que la representación principal del NO le corresponde "al Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño" véase, Acuerdo de Comisión CEE-AC-20-130-A, que fuera revisado, a solicitud del propio Comisionado del PPD, y notificado el 29 de mayo de 2020.

Ante la existencia de un Acuerdo de Comisión unánime, este servidor no tiene jurisdicción sobre la materia para atender la petición esbozada en su carta del 3 de junio de 2020. Véase, Art. 3.004 del Código Electoral, 16 LPRA Sec. 4014.

Con el testimonio de mi estimación,

  
JUAN ERNESTO DÁVILA RIVERA  
PRESIDENTE

C. COMISIONADOS ELECTORALES  
SECRETARIO DE LA CEE

RECIBIDO  
Oficina del Secretario  
Fecha: 7/6/20 Hora: 8:45  
Firma: 

PO BOX 195552 SAN JUAN PR 00919-5552

Certifico que este documento es copia fiel y exacta del original que obra en la Comisión Estatal de Elecciones y a petición de la parte interesada, expido la presente en San Juan, Puerto Rico, hoy 7 de junio de 2020.



COMISION ESTATAL DE ELECCIONES DE PUERTO RICO  
OFICINA DEL PRESIDENTE.

Juan E. Dávila Rivera  
Presidente

9 de junio de 2020

Ángel L. Rosa Barrios  
Secretario  
Comisión Estatal de Elecciones

SOLICITUD DE NOTIFICACIÓN

Estimado señor Rosa Barrios:

Previo cumplimiento con el Capítulo VI de la Ley Núm. 51, le instruyo a que proceda de inmediato con la certificación de los representantes de las alternativas del NO y el SI, según consta en el Acuerdo de Comisión CEE-AC-20-130A, notificado el viernes, 29 de mayo de 2020.

Con el testimonio de mi estimación,

Juan E. Davila Rivera

C. Comisionados Electorales

RECIBIDO

Oficina del Secretario

Fecha: 9/6/20 Hora: 8.45

Firma: [Handwritten Signature]

Certifico que este documento es copia fiel y exacta del original que obra en la Comisión Estatal de Elecciones y a petición de la parte interesada, expido la presente en San Juan, Puerto Rico, hoy 22 de NOV de 2020



*[Handwritten signature]*



PAN • TIERRA • LIBERTAD

C. E. E.  
COMISIONADO P. N. P.

11 DE MAYO DE 2020

10

JOSÉ ARIEL NAZARIO ÁLVAREZ  
SECRETARIO GENERAL

B-3

## CERTIFICACIÓN

La honorable Junta de Gobierno del Partido Popular Democrático ha avalado, en votación mediante referéndum electrónico efectuado el sábado 16 de mayo de 2020, la autorización al presidente del Partido, Anibal José Torres, para realizar todos los procedimientos requeridos en la Ley 51-2020, conocida como "*Ley para la Definición Final del Estatus Político de Puerto Rico*", a los fines de que nuestra colectividad política participe como el representante principal del "NO" en el referéndum establecido en la mencionada Ley.

En el referéndum electrónico participaron 25 de 32 miembros con derecho al voto conforme a nuestro Reglamento, todos avalando la propuesta.

En San Juan, Puerto Rico, sábado 16 de mayo de 2020.

*[Handwritten signature of José Ariel Nazario Álvarez]*

José Ariel Nazario Álvarez

PO BOX 9020436 SAN JUAN, PR 00902-0436  
secretariogeneral@ppdpr.net  
Tel. (787) 721-2600

Certifico que este documento es copia fiel y exacta del original que obra en la Comisión Estatal de Elecciones y a petición de la parte interesada, expido la presente en San Juan, Puerto Rico, hoy 17 de mayo de 2020.

## Videos



Anibal Acevedo... - Boricuas Unidos en la Diáspora - BUDPR

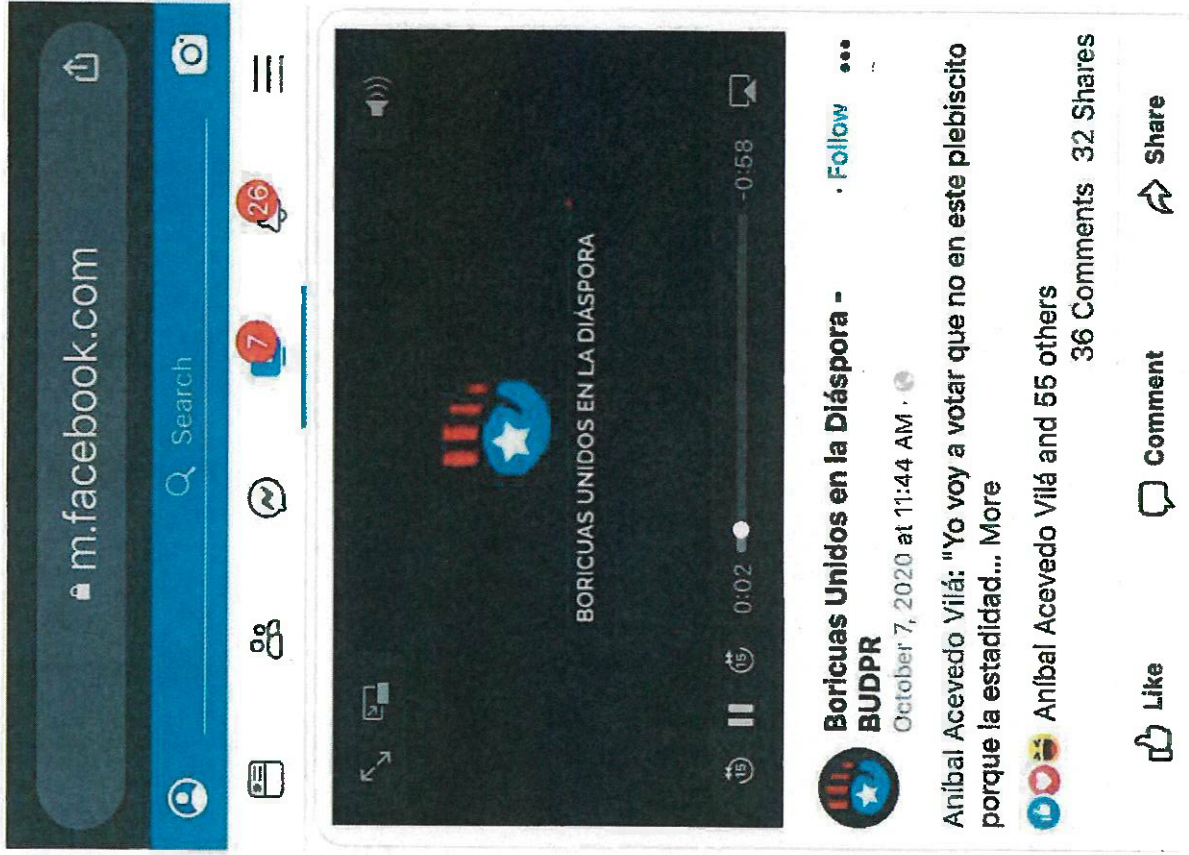
Facebook

Oct 7, 2020



Boricuas Unidos en la Diáspora - BUDPR... - Boricuas Unidos en la...

Facebook · Boricuas Unidos en la Diáspora...





Luis V. Gutiérrez ✓

@RepGutierrez

C-3

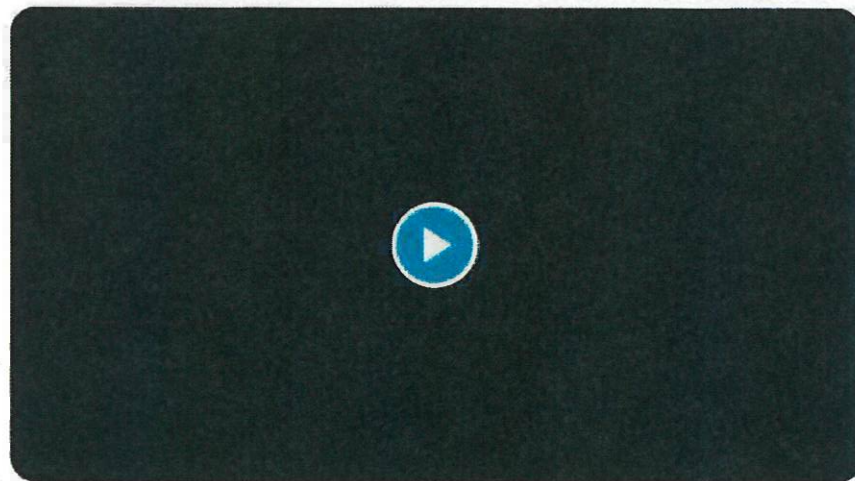
El martes el pueblo de Puerto Rico le va a decir NO a las falsas villas y castillas que los mercaderes de la anexión nos quieren vender.

Aquí te explican cómo la estadidad arruinaría TÚ bolsillo:

[youtu.be/Y6OyM427qPo](https://youtu.be/Y6OyM427qPo)

@PRexitBook #VotaNO

 YouTube



**Dile NO a la Estadidad**

En este video explicativo animado, usted podrá ver porqué Puerto Rico jamás será ni debe ser un estado de

los Estados Unidos. Usted verá cuáles son los costos



**Luis V. Gutiérrez**  @Re... · 02 nov. 20 :

“ ...to call a Status Convention or Constitutional Assembly to directly elect delegates who would negotiate with an official Congressional commission.”

[#VotaNO](#) [#NOaPNP](#) [#NOaLaCorrupción](#)  
[#NOaAtropello](#) [#NOaLaEstadidad](#)



4

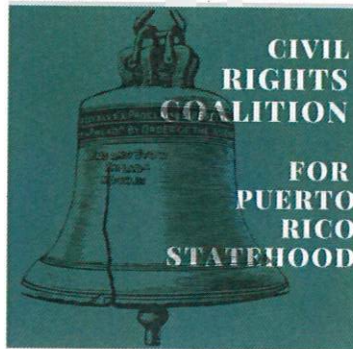


4



15





April 13, 2021

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva  
Chair, House Committee on  
Natural Resources

The Honorable Bruce Westerman  
Ranking Member House Committee  
on Natural Resources

The Honorable Joe Manchin  
Chair, Senate Committee on  
Energy & Natural Resources

The Honorable Joe Barroso  
Ranking Member, Senate  
Committee on Energy &  
Natural Resources

Dear Chairman Grijalva, Ranking Member Westerman, Chairman Manchin, Ranking Member Barroso:

For over one hundred years the U.S. Citizens of Puerto Rico have been disenfranchised and treated unequally while most fellow citizens were unaware of this civil rights violation. Hurricane María opened the eyes of our great nation to the poverty, lack of representation and rights of those of us living in the oldest colony in the world. Last November voters in the island once more stood up to change the discriminatory treatment that we have been submitted to. With an absolute majority, 53%, our people demanded statehood for Puerto Rico. There is nowhere to hide anymore, this Congress has the responsibility to act, and act now.

The United States, the beacon of democracy for the rest of the world, has a blind spot to justice in that it has more than 3.1 million of its own citizens living in a colony, denied of their civil rights and treated as less than equal.

We respectfully must insist that this hearing and all urgent congressional proceedings in 2021 meant to eradicate this civil rights inequality should be about accelerating the necessary steps to admit Puerto Rico to the Union. Any other dilation of duty, distraction, inertia or barrier to

the democratic will of those of us living the second-class citizenship of colonial rule, is not in line with democracy and the better interests of the Republic. There are some simple truths that the honorable members of this Congress are duty bound to confront. The status quo is dead and the democratic will of the people of Puerto Rico is undeniable. If this hearing is to do nothing yet again and kick the can to another generation, I respectfully must warn that you would be telling the 3.1 million citizens of Puerto Rico that democracy does not apply to us by virtue of our location, ethnicity, and lack of power at this time.

The fact that some powerful politicians and business leaders keep opposing our civil and inalienable right to equality, vote, and representation despite the expressed democratic will of our fellow islanders, is outright un-American. Democracy will not be denied. Democracy will be served either by a George Washington-inspired understanding of what is fair and just by the honorable members of this committee or it shall be sought by the cries of our demands for our civil rights to be respected and our standing as equal to be honored. We will accept no less and you should aspire to no less. After all, isn't the American Experience about freedom and equality? 123 years is a long time to wait for it and the consequences have been devastating.

The Supreme Court Justices in the Insular Cases of 1901 denied our right to equality and statehood because we were, quoting their own words, "savages". If you choose to perpetuate this inequality, what do you tell your children? What shall be inscribed in the Congressional record? How will history judge members who in the face of a thrice-expressed democratic vote, deny the most Americans of rights? We are watching. The world is watching to see if our civil rights will continue to be violated and by whom. There are no two sides of equal merit or validity anymore. Members must choose to either be for democracy and support statehood now or for Jim Crow colonialism and either do nothing or support a decades long convoluted effort to have a few chosen people decide the fate of those who believed in the one wo(man), one vote pillar of American Democracy. Inertia can't be an alternative anymore. It's over and the time is now, today, AHORA, to do what is right or forever be a civil rights denier. The status quo died with the last plebiscite.

The perpetuation of the colony is a Jim Crow era legacy that subjugates US residents of the island and robs us of the civil rights you enjoy. At this moment of great expectations, I can't describe in any other way than outright shameful that some fellow US citizens (and particularly Latinos and Puerto Rican-Americans that enjoy the equality of living the prosperity of statehood but know our reality and advocate to keep us poor and under anti-democratic submission without vote or voice), lend their names and voices to sustaining an anti-American and anti-democratic structure for perpetuation of the poverty of rights and means that is colonial rule. The idea of more study, further delay of democracy, and outright denial of what just happened is not in line with the ideals of the Federalist Papers or the Constitution. To those who oppose granting our civil rights and delaying justice via a subterfuge of no action or acting to put further hurdles in front of the democratic will of our people must hear our voices now. Make no mistake, Puerto Rico is watching carefully.

I ask your indulgence to provide frightening statistics that cruelly paint the civil rights deficit as experience in the daily lives of the US citizens of Puerto Rico. Facts tell the truth and give us a stark reminder that this blind spot of democracy under the U.S flag creates suffering every day.

Facts about Puerto Rico that tell the story of inequality:

- Over 5 million Puerto Ricans have moved stateside over the decades and 3.1 million are left on the island. Are you waiting for the island to be empty to finally grant statehood? Why? Why empty paradise? Why so few come back to the island?
- In 2019, 66,021 island residents “voted” by buying a one-way ticket to statehood with their suitcases in tow, and left Puerto Rico (that is 180 good-byes per day, every single day). Insensitive delay tactics are breaking our families apart every single day. It is shameful and un-American.
- An average family in Puerto Rico makes \$25,338 per year which is 39% percent of the US average of \$65,712. We are relatively worse off as compared to the national average than we were in 1952, when what was ironically called Free Associated State in Spanish in Puerto Rico and the gentrified "Commonwealth" sold to Congress and the United Nations, was established as the perpetuation of the oldest colony in the world (continuous civil rights deficit since 1492).
- Over 45% of our residents are living under the poverty level (1 in 2!)
- We have a very high dependency on welfare.
- Puerto Rico suffers the worst inequality under the US flag with a GINI rate (where 1 is equal) of 0.5509.
- In addition to low wages, we endure a high cost of living including government sponsored regressive taxation of our poorest people that should put to shame liberals and conservatives alike.

No wonder, again today, another airplane full of our smart and hardworking people hugged their mom's good-bye and left our island for good. Delaying the democratic cry for statehood of our island would accelerate this. Is anyone in your committees wishing to sentence another generation of Puerto Ricans to broken families and certain poverty? Do you want another plane to leave tomorrow? May it weigh on your conscience, as it does on my heart every day, and may you please see that decisions to act or delay have consequences and these affect real and decent citizens of these United States. Delay and anti-democratic practices create more suffering. Those of you enjoying your civil rights stateside don't seem to understand that you are playing with our lives and our rights as if this was 1901 and we were the “savages” still written in the rulings used to this day to deny us equal rights. The time for patient study, delay tactics, committees, and task forces is over. Democracy has spoken. Let her live! Our veterans



and their sacrifices should remind all that if we are equal in battle, we must be equal in voting and civil rights.

For 69 years, the argument to do nothing is that we can't agree on a solution. The scaffolding to that argument has been carefully crafted by those who benefit at the local and stateside level from colonial rule and the funds that arrive for this purpose. Great resources have been spent to maintain the status quo. This has given the colonial elite carte blanche to keep the oligarchic power base intact and have motivated anti-democratic forces from the region, historical enemies of the United States, to invest and promote instability in our democracy in Puerto Rico. The combination of extremists on the Left and Right have denied what our veterans so valiantly fought for: democracy.

The November 2020 vote, with similar language to Hawaii's and Alaska's vote, was a victory for statehood despite tactics that included scaring older voters saying that a vote for statehood would mean they would lose their homes to taxes, false advertising saying that if Congress did not legislate, the plebiscite was useless, and a strong campaign to say that even if you favored statehood, not to vote to punish the statehood party in power. The fact that 40% more voters said yes to statehood than the accumulated votes of any gubernatorial candidate, means that this is not a political issue and rather a civil rights issue that goes beyond politics. The democratic exercise of one wo(man) one vote chose statehood even when all these tactics were used to derail the will of the people. And yet, these same forces keep seeking to delay statehood. What are the motivations if not economic and the pursuit of power for power's sake?

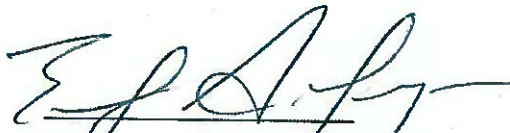
The project sponsored by the Honorable Congresswoman Velazquez intends to keep the colony afloat and running for decades to come and to perpetuate the civil rights deficit that exists. It is an endless loop that intends to stop majority rule and democracy from happening finally. There is no other goal but to perpetuate the oligarchic rule on the island and it will lead to another plane tomorrow leaving with our best and brightest, and the next day and so forth. Where is the democratic will of the people in that? Hurricane María showed the Nation that we are an island of great people with a civil rights deficit. It also taught our citizens that we must claim our rights as equals and not have to beg for every right, program or law. We are the largest group of Americans without representation in Congress or presidential vote in the history of the Nation. There is no answer to the question of why that does not include discrimination and a civil rights issue.

There are no two sides to democracy. Either you are for it or against it. The time to be for democracy and voting rights is now. Which side will you be on? Puerto Rico has earned in over 123 years contribution, the right to be equal among many as a state of our great Union. We shall join our fellow disenfranchised Americans of the District of Columbia in asserting our rights to equality, voting rights, and democracy.

The only legislative option that respects the will of the people of Puerto Rico, and ensures a binding process of self-determination is H.R. 1522 & S. 780, the Puerto Rico Statehood

Admission Act. You have the perfect opportunity to be on the right side of history now, to do the right thing. We will accept no less, for doing so would be un-American and unfair. The time is now. Our civil rights battle will be won here or elsewhere but it will be won. George Washington would have been on our side and so should you.

Respectfully,



Evelyn Abreu Lopez  
SECRETARY - TREASURER

Dr. Evelyn Abreu  
Co-Founder / Secretary Treasurer



JAIME FORTUÑO  
PRESIDENT

Jaime Fortuño  
Co-Founder / President



The Honorable Raúl Grijalva  
Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources

The Honorable Bruce Westerman  
Ranking Member, House Committee on Natural  
Resources

The Honorable Joe Manchin  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy & Natural  
Resources

The Honorable John Barrasso  
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Energy &  
Natural Resources

Dear Chairman Grijalva, Ranking Member Westerman, Chairman Manchin, Ranking Member Barrasso:  
As U.S. citizens from Puerto Rico, we are coming together to express our support for the Puerto Rico Statehood  
Admission Act, H.R. 1522 and S. 780, and to call on Congress to pass this legislation as quickly as possible.

Puerto Ricans have been part of the U.S. for over one hundred and twenty years and we have made countless  
contributions to the betterment of American society. During that time the population of Puerto Ricans stateside  
has grown to close to six million. Yet for the three million U.S. citizens that remain on the island, we remain  
disenfranchised in federal elections and subjected to unequal treatment in federal laws and programs. This  
reduces economic development, has robbed our poor and elderly of lifesaving healthcare, and every day breaks  
up our families and communities as people feel forced to move stateside to seek out better opportunities and  
quality of life for themselves and their children.

Congress must immediately end its inherently colonial territorial rule over Puerto Rico, because it violates  
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Beyond that, it doesn't serve either America or Puerto Rico to prolong an outdated, dysfunctional and morally  
corrupt form of government which its own citizens have now rejected on multiple occasions.

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sponsored referendum calling for full democracy and equality through statehood. While some bills in Congress,  
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"self-determination," only the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act acknowledges and responds to the freely  
expressed will of the people.















A majority of voters in Puerto Rico have requested statehood, now Congress must respond by officially offering  
it and allowing voters on the island to ratify their choice in a binding vote. To turn around and tell voters to go  
back to the drawing board and re-define multiple other options which the majority has rejected three times in  
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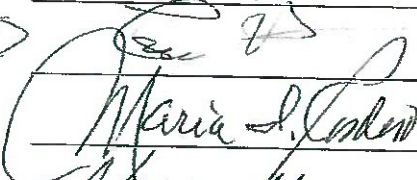



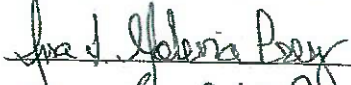



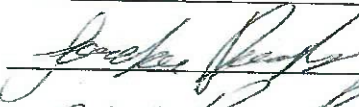







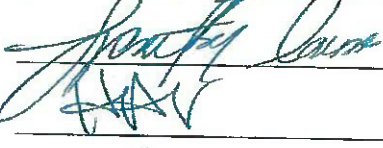


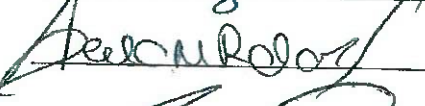

We are natural born U.S. citizens and want an equal seat at the table in the federal government that writes and  
implements the laws that we live under. We want our full voting rights as American citizens, and would  
challenge any voting Member of Congress that would deny that to us to answer if their constituents would  
accept the second-class citizenship that we are subjected to under territory status.


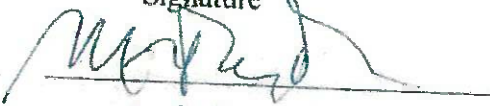






















We are proud to be Puerto Ricans, and also proud to be U.S. citizens, and know that there is no law that limits us from being both. So, don't let anyone tell you that statehood will somehow diminish our cultural pride and heritage. If anything, the economic progress that statehood would unleash will allow Puerto Rico to flourish in ways that will mutually benefit the Island and the States.

If you really believe in democracy, justice, government by the consent of the governed, you must not hesitate any further or give any more excuses. Congress must grant us the equal rights and equal responsibilities that we have earned with the blood of our veterans and the tears of their mothers, wives, children and families. Pass the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act as soon as possible and together we can help make America a more perfect Union.

Sincerely,

<u>Name</u>	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Zip Code</u>
Juan G. Rivera Santurce		00769
Manuel O. Claudio Rod.		00769
Zulma Reyes		00769
Francisco J. Ortiz Berlingier		00729
Bernardo Diaz Gonzalez		00769
Tom Tarr		00769
Sara J. Muñoz Meléndez		00769
Antonio L. Benítez Ortiz		00769
Merlyn J. Rivera Cayos		00769
Yajaira Alvaroz		00769
Luis A. Pasco		00765
Miguel A. David Pariz		00769
Linares Torres		00769
Kenneth G. De Jesus Riquelme		00769
Luz E. Rosa		00769

Name	Signature	Zip Code
Alberto Vázquez		00983
Aida J Vazgo		00782
NICOLAS HERNANDEZ		00782
Maria J. Cordero		00782
Yamileth Marquez		00782
Emilio Rodríguez		00773
Leandro Venosa		00987
Ana J. Molina Cruz		00782
Pedro Gonzalez Rosado		00782
Saed Rivera Vera		00969
Densy Marquez Ruiz		00969
Juanaka Rodriguez		00782
Ada C. Rivera Rivera		00782
Ana C. Alejandro		00782
comamen		00782
Christian J. Alicia Cobos		00702
Raul Alicia Nieves		00782
Cristina Oquendo		00983
AIDA M. MARQUEZ IBANEZ		00969
Jaretzy Carreras Rosado		00782
Hecmala Aponte Velazquez		00782
Daniel Vega Ortiz		00795
Keila M Robles		00782
Isabel Agosto Rosario		00782

Name	Signature	Zip Code
Miguel Quiles		00782
Marteen Pérez Ortiz		00769
Zuleika ZIEKKE		00716
Carmen Melendez		00716
Sophya V. Mercedes		00716
Ralph A. Pérez Brimmett		00680
Open Rosalea Calderon		00603
Amarillis Santiago Calderon		00603
Luis A. Pastora Calderon		00603
Victor Calderon Cestero		00910
Victor Luis Calderon Neri		00603
Isana Calderon Cestero		00603
Genaro Marcial		00603
Caleb Tully Calderon		00603
Karla P. Frenks		00910
Ivette Yule Bertio		00662
Veronica Ayala		00745
Opse Ayala		00745
Protigaila Ramos		00917
Jenny L. Brimmett		00680
Johanna Pérez Pite		00680
Mariela Pérez Brimmett		00680
Debbie Pérez Brimmett		00623
David Ramos		00673

Name

Signature

Zip Code

Poleranis Matner



00677

Sandra VARGAS

Sandra Vargas

00677

Josue C. Moreno Rivera



00677

Brendaliz Arce



00623

FRANCISCA Alexis Garcia



00725

José Enrique Avilés Santiago

J.EAS

00676

Gladys Martinez Lopez



00677

Tatiana Peira



00677

Carlos Ruiz



00677

John Zup



00677

José Iván Rodríguez



00690 R.P. U.S.A.

Domingo Bonilla Felicia



00603

Melissa Vargas



00690

Ricardo Pizarro



00603

Angel Miranda



00603

Natalia Riera

Natalia Riera

00603

Wilson E. Roman



00603

Wilson Roman Lopez



00603

Marbell Rivera S



00951

Hector F Morales Chiu

Hector Morales Chiu

00676

Carlos P Ramos



00677

Zoraida Buxó



00966

Marcos Flores

Manojo

00771

Name

Signature

Zip Code

Iselyn Santana Figueira

Iselyn Santana

00646

Carmen Fajardo

Carmen Fajardo

00921

Pablo Santana

P. Santana

00718

Miroslava Santana

Miroslava Santana

00711

Alex Rivera Santiago

Alex Rivera

00955

Julissa Santana Martinez

Julissa Santana

00771

Miriam Santana Martinez

Miriam Santana

00721





The Honorable Raúl Grijalva  
Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources

The Honorable Joe Manchin  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy & Natural  
Resources

The Honorable Bruce Westerman  
Ranking Member, House Committee on Natural  
Resources

The Honorable John Barrasso  
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Energy &  
Natural Resources

Dear Chairman Grijalva, Ranking Member Westerman, Chairman Manchin, Ranking Member Barrasso:

As U.S. citizens from Puerto Rico, we are coming together to express our support for the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act, H.R. 1522 and S. 780, and to call on Congress to pass this legislation as quickly as possible.

Puerto Ricans have been part of the U.S. for over one hundred and twenty years and we have made countless contributions to the betterment of American society. During that time the population of Puerto Ricans stateside has grown to close to six million. Yet for the three million U.S. citizens that remain on the island, we remain disenfranchised in federal elections and subjected to unequal treatment in federal laws and programs. This reduces economic development, has robbed our poor and elderly of lifesaving healthcare, and every day breaks up our families and communities as people feel forced to move stateside to seek out better opportunities and quality of life for themselves and their children.

Congress must immediately end its inherently colonial territorial rule over Puerto Rico, because it violates America's values of democracy, equal justice under the law, and government by the consent of the governed. Beyond that, it doesn't serve either America or Puerto Rico to prolong an outdated, dysfunctional and morally corrupt form of government which its own citizens have now rejected on multiple occasions.

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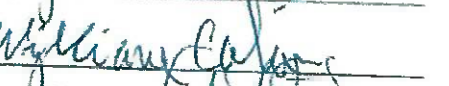




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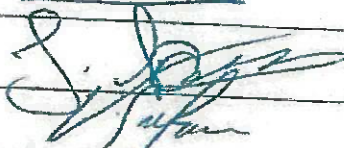
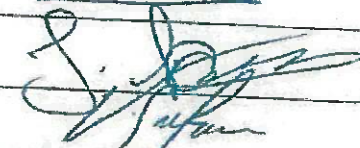
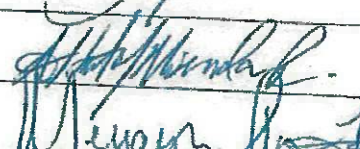
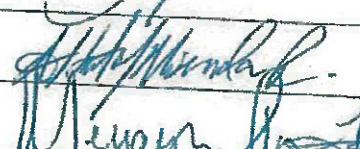
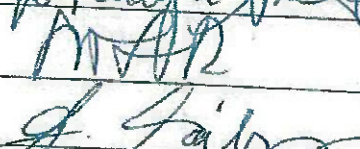
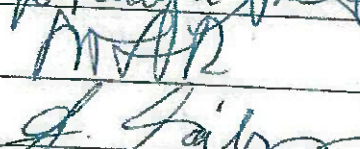
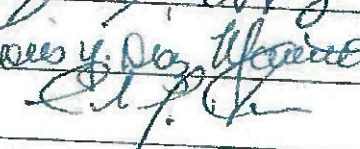
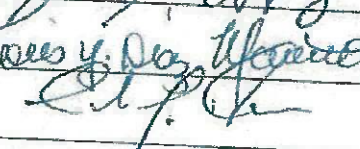
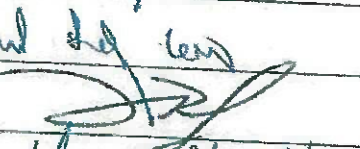
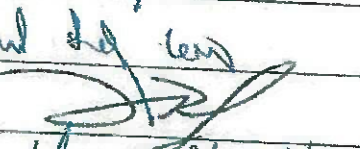
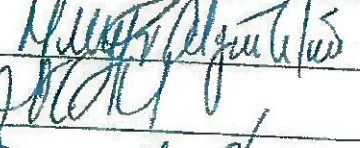
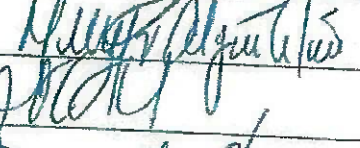
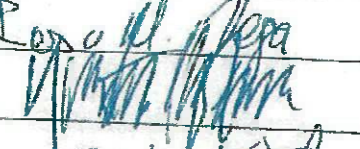
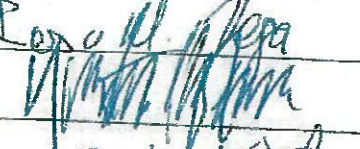
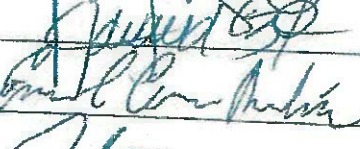
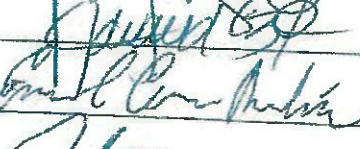
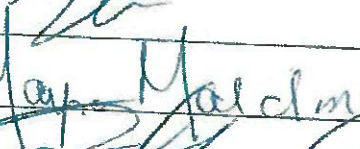
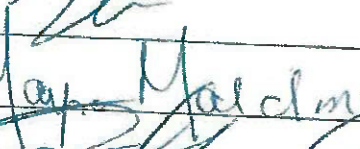
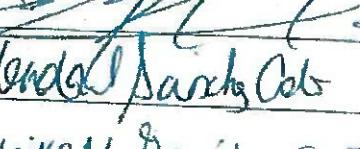
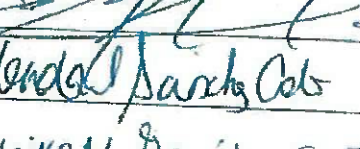
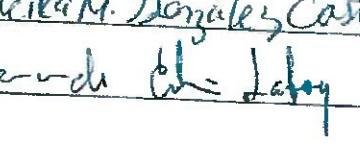
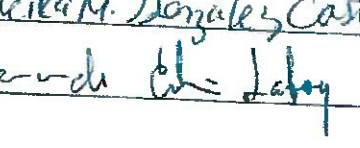

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Sincerely,

<u>Name</u>	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Zip Code</u>
Ramon Perez Vega		00918
Alba I. Calderon Cestero		00918
Aris A. Colon NAZARIO		00766
Tina M. Ramos Tracy		00766
Peliber to Rodriguez		00766
Lizette N. Torres Amador		00766
Carlos G Reyes Soto		00754
Julian Soto, Conrado		00901
Richard Mody Lech		00766
Ramon E. Marrero		00706
Delvando Deuser y Soria		00766
Eduardo Adz Laby		00766
William Am Colon		00766
Alicia Colon		00766
Eric J. Romo		00766

Name	Signature	Zip Code
Raiza Marrero		7644
Bernardo Keyin		00766
José J. Díaz		00766
Victor R. Santana Rodriguez		00766
Alberto Miranda Guerra		00766
Mayra Pons Figueroa		00766
Mildred Figueroa Rios		00766
German O. Sanchez		00766
Doris Y. Diaz Marrero		00766
Edgardo Lopez Cornejo		00766
Leon Laboy Corra		00766
Kelvin Rivero Figueroa		00766
Millynas Algorta Colon		00766
Guillermo R. Trizani		00766
Rosa U. Vega		00766
Alejandro Algorta Colon		00766
Ariel Irel Vez Torres		00601
Emanuel Cuevas Rodriguez		00601
Ruben Valentin		00766
Mayra Maldonado		00766
Carlos J. Colon Colon		00766
Glenda I Sanchez Colon		00766
Zuleika M. Gonzalez castillo		00766
GERARDO Colon Laboy		00766

Name	Signature	Zip Code
Angel Torres	Angel Torres	00766
Miguel Rodriguez	Miguel Rodriguez	00766
Erdylamar Delacero Vega	Erdylamar Vega	00766
Krystal H. Torres Gonzalez	Krystal H. Torres	00766
Elizabeth Rivera	Elizabeth Rivera	00766
Gisela Rios Torra	Gisela Rios Torra	00766
Loida E. Zapata Melendez	Loida E. Zapata Melendez	00766
Keyla E. Torres Santos	Keyla E. Torres Santos	00766
Ana M. Burgos Colon	Ana M. Burgos Colon	00766
Anthony J. Alvarado "	Anthony J. Alvarado	00766
Gehid Rios Colon	Gehid Rios Colon	00766
Jose B. Gonzalez Cruz	Jose B. Gonzalez Cruz	00766
Lorena Mendez	Lorena Mendez	00766
JOSE A. SANTANA TORRES	JOSE A. SANTANA TORRES	00730
Ed N. Rivera Alvar	Ed N. Rivera Alvar	00601
Doris E. Pichell	Doris E. Pichell	00714
Nelson L. Cortez	Nelson L. Cortez	00601
FERDINAND SOTA	Ferdinand Sota	00601
Antonio Vera Montero	Antonio Vera Montero	00601
Yudia Maldonado	Yudia Maldonado	00601
Maritza Quinones	Maritza Quinones	00601
Somar I. Torres Maldonado	Somar I. Torres Maldonado	00601
Ernesto Vitez Maldonado	Ernesto Vitez Maldonado	00601
Ana R. Caraballo	Ana R. Caraballo	00601

Name	Signature	Zip Code
Karlo Javiel		00640
Sonia N Bendiel		00601
Victor J. Penuel		00727
Nepomoceno L. Lopez		00601
Oscar A. Orrego Torres		00601
Norahyz Lambrey Lopez		00601
MAY Jessica Pujon Corra		00601
Miguelis T. Carrasquel		00601
Daniel Roberto Ros		00601
Wanda Q. Maldonado		00601
Jessica Caraballo		00601
Kenia Ortiz Rivera		00601
Ja Se O. Rivera		00601
Ana Maria		00601
Carmen Ana Perez Nunez		00601
Archiez Ortiz Velaz		00601
Jacqueline O. Rodriguez		00601
Andrea Torres		00601
Mauricio Carrasquel		00601
Anilda A. Luaces		00601
Ely Quiatany		00601
Franklyn Talab		00601
Chelise Barbara Robinson		00601
Enrique A. Puig Ramos		00601

Jesus L. Ortiz

*[Signature]*

00769

Name

Signature

Zip Code

William A. Rodriguez Pagan

*[Signature]*

00769

Angel C. Mateo

*[Signature]*

00769

Angelys N. Mateo

*[Signature]*

00769

Miguel Beato

*[Signature]*

00769

Sandra J. Alvarez

*[Signature]*

00769

Rafael Santos

*[Signature]*

00769

Humberto J. Pagan

*[Signature]*

00769

Adelberto Rojas Garcia

*[Signature]*

00739

Angelina P. Duran

*[Signature]*

00769

Carlos B. Solorzano

*[Signature]*

00769

Julio A. Lopez

*[Signature]*

00769

Ingrid S. Morales

*[Signature]*

00769

Bernice Negron Rivera

*[Signature]*

00769

Guillermo Colon

*[Signature]*

00769

Glady's Marie Rivera

*[Signature]*

00739

Janice Rivera

*[Signature]*

00725

Marianela Colon Melendez

*[Signature]*

00769

Merlyn Zayas Rodriguez

*[Signature]*

00769

Milda R. Delgado Rivera

*[Signature]*

00769

Maru Rivero Cisneros

*[Signature]*

00769

Laneikka Robles Cisneros

*[Signature]*

00769

William J. Ortiz

*[Signature]*

00769

Daniela Ortiz

*[Signature]*

00769

MANUEL RODRIGUEZ VERA

Manuel Rodriguez

00640

Statement for the Record  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
Full Committee Hearing: Insular Affairs Legislative Hearing on Puerto Rico Political Status  
Wednesday, April 14, 2021

Greetings,

Blessing to you, and member of Congress. I am writing to you as a Legislator of the municipality of Carolina, where I represent over 186,000 persons and 104,378 voters.

For over one-hundred years, the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico have been dismissed from federal elections and subjected to unequal treatment across federal programs and civil Rights that make Last November, move thousands of voters and stood up the change to obtain an absolute majority of 53% demanding statehood for Puerto Rico in a locally sponsored referendum. The Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act, H.R. 1522 and S. 780, directly respond to that mandate, and we urge you to support it and help get it approved as soon as possible.

Puerto Rico's referendum was historic, because it is the first time that we request as a US Territory a statehood unquestionable mandate with the majority support of the people on the island with a simple "YES" or "NO" vote. The 117th Congress have therefore a unique opportunity to make history to end America's inherently colonial rule over Puerto Rico, which is the most respected American values of democracy, equality, justice and civil right under the law.

We recognize that are some Congresswoman such as Rep. Nydia Velázquez (NY) and Sen. Robert Menendez (NJ), who oppose statehood for Puerto Rico and have completely ignored the voice of the people's in the results of the referendum last November. Therefore, they will be submitting a counter-proposal, the Puerto Rico Self-Determination Act (PRSDA), which has faced criticism from representatives of all status options.

The most significant concern, across party lines, is that the PRSDA is ultimately non-binding. Under the bill, Congress would be under no obligation to implement whichever status option is chosen by the convention and later voted by the electors of PR. This would represent a huge setback for voters in Puerto Rico who have engaged in multiple acts of self-determination over the last decade and have shown, an increasing clarity, that Puerto Rican's voters reject the current territory status and have favor statehood over all non-territory options.

Beyond the will of the people on the island, Puerto Rican's stateside also favor statehood for PR by wide margins. For example, recently polls show 81% of Puerto Rican residents in Florida and 69% of those in New York favor the admission of Puerto Rico as a state. Also, the majority of Americans have also supported the idea for decades according to Gallup.

This is a issue on the island as well as across the Nation, and Congress has a moral obligation to act promptly.

For that reason we only recommend the legislative option that respects the will of the people of Puerto Rico, and ensures a binding which is a process of self-determination and that is H.R. 1522



& S. 780, the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act. By offering statehood, stipulating the terms of admission, and requiring a ratification vote. Congress would finally open the door to full equality and democracy for the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico while leaving the ultimate choice in their hands. If a majority opposes statehood at that point, then the island would remain a territory with the capacity to pursue independence or free association through the procedural mechanism of their choice, including a status convention. Congress has a moral obligation to let the people of Puerto Rico decide their own self-determination process for admission.

I request Congress to open the door to a full emancipation and equality for our fellow Americans in Puerto Rico by supporting and passing the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act. The United States should understand they can and must do better for our fellow Americans.

Sincerely,

Hon. Milagros G. López Campos  
Municipal Legislator of Carolina, Puerto Rico

Copy  
[jennifer.gonzalez@mail.house.gov](mailto:jennifer.gonzalez@mail.house.gov)

*Domestic and International  
Legal Advice, L.L.C.  
c/o Gregorio Igartua  
Box 3911  
Aguadilla P.R. 00605  
Abogado - Notario  
Attorney at Law*

*L.L.M. INTERNATIONAL LAW – G.W.U.  
MASTER TAX LAW - G.U.L.C.*

*Tel. (787)891-9040  
Cel. (787) 379-5095  
e-mail: [bufeteigartua@yahoo.com](mailto:bufeteigartua@yahoo.com)*

April 2, 2021

c/o email: [raul.grijalva@mail.house.gov](mailto:raul.grijalva@mail.house.gov)

Hon. Raul Grijalva  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. 2302 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

RE: WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR COMMITTEE ON PUERTO RICO'S  
TERRITORIAL STATUS  
P.R. SELF DETERMINATION ACT  
STATEHOOD ADMISSION ACT

Dear Congressman Grijalva:

I was born in Puerto Rico, U.S.A., and, I am an American citizen resident of Puerto Rico. I am sending this written testimony in opposition to the proposed "Self Determination Act., which is not constitutionally viable, and to support the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act. It is the only political alternative that fits in the U.S. Constitutional Framework, and it is 122 years overdue.

As you know, Puerto Rico has been a part of the United States since 1898. For 122 years we have been under the U.S. Government discriminatory practice of being denied the right to vote in Federal Elections, and of government without the consent of the governed. (3.4 million American Citizens by birth). We are also subject to unequal treatment in economic policies

implemented by Congress for the states, which have moved Puerto Rico into bankruptcy. Moreover, for some cases the Federal Courts apply the U. S. Constitution, and not for others. Ironically, we pay more than \$3 billion dollars a year in federal taxes, more than some states and many state regions. (IRS Highlights 2020).

The Committee of Natural Resources you preside, has expressed interest in pursuing Congressional action in the issue of the political status of Puerto Rico. I suggest that you consider as the most viable alternative that Puerto Rico be certified as an incorporated territory first, which de facto it is. Notwithstanding incorporation is not permanent, therefore Congress should simultaneously resolved to move Puerto Rico in transit to statehood at a definite date. Certification of Incorporation would make the U.S. Constitution fully applicable, and would give us parity with federal funds as if Puerto Rico were a state. We qualify for incorporation by having been assimilated more than any other U.S. Territory before becoming a state. Although there may be conflicting views of what is the political relation of Puerto Rico to the United States, due to the reality that we are still not a state, Congress has assimilated us gradually since 1898 into a federalist relation to be like a de facto incorporated territory. (See: G. Igartua, The "de facto" Incorporated Territory U.S. of Puerto Rico. A copy of the Book was mailed to you a few months ago, and one is being mailed to the Committee with this letter).

I respectfully suggest that you consider proposing to Congress to declare Puerto Rico officially an Incorporated Territory of the United States in transit to statehood. (See Petition enclosed - Annex A). It is the only political alternative that fits into the U. S. Constitutional framework, it is 122 years overdue. Rather than holding more hearings on what we could hypothetically be, which is discriminatory, our political and civil rights must be recognized by Congress based on what we are, 3.4 American citizens by birth residents of a de facto incorporated territory. Incorporation was recently supported unanimously by the National Association of U.S. Mayors. (Annex B). (See also, *Consejo de Salud Playa de Ponce v Rullan*, 586 FS 2<sup>nd</sup> 22 (2008).

No one in Puerto Rico wants independence, nor continue to be confused with political status alternatives which do not fit within the U.S. constitutional framework. No one in Puerto Rico wants to renounce their American Citizenship. A Republic of American citizens would be a matter of national security concern. (3.3 million Residing in Puerto Rico, 5 million residing in states). Many are confused by the daily practice of uncertainty brought by the questioning about what our rights are as American citizens, or could be. Consider within this context the “Puerto Rico Self Determination Act” proposed for American citizens after 122 years under our American flag. Were African-Americans subjected, or should be subjected, to hearings on whether they would like to be slaves again, or be moved to a Country in Africa?. Should Mexican –Americans be asked whether they would like to renounce their American Citizenship to Mexican and be moved back to Mexico, or should their American citizenship status be questioned, as your Committee is doing with us in Puerto Rico in 2021?

Consider as constitutionally viable only to start holding hearings on how the American Citizens residents of Puerto Rico can have equal rights and government by the consent of the governed. (*U.S. Constitution Amendments XIV and XV*). Congressman Grijalva, statehood for you, for Congresswomen Velazquez and Ocasio, for all the members of your Committee, for all Congressmen, and statehood for us the American citizens residents of Puerto Rico. Time is of the essence.

I respectfully request to be allowed to participate in the April 15, 2021, hearing your Committee has scheduled on this subject, and in support of our American Citizenship rights.

Sincerely yours,  
s/Gregorio Igartua  
Gregorio Igartua

Note – Please provide a copy of this letter to all member of the Committee of Natural Recourses. Please make this written testimony part of the Official Record of the hearing on Puerto Rico’s Territorial Status scheduled by the Committee for April 14, 2021.



# PETITION

## ADDRESSED TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO CERTIFY PUERTO RICO WITH A JOINT RESOLUTION AS AN INCORPORATED TERRITORY OF THE UNITED STATES IN TRANSIT TO STATEHOOD

- WHEREAS:** Puerto Rico became a United States of America territory in 1898 by the Treaty of Paris, which provided that: "... the civil rights and political status of the native inhabitants of the territories hereby ceded to the United States shall be determined by Congress." Immediately the native inhabitants became Nationals under the Custody and "*Patens Patriae*" of the United States of America.
- WHEREAS:** In 1917, the residents of Puerto Rico were granted United States American citizenship, by their own free and voluntary election, and after 1941 by birth, as disposed by Congress, enacting laws to such effect. To this date, three point four millions United States American Citizens reside in Puerto Rico and five millions have moved their residence to the mainland, were they have worked and are still working in building our Nation.
- WHEREAS:** Since 1917, the United States American Citizens of Puerto Rico have demonstrated their loyalty to the United States of America and to democracy by serving with dedication and honor in all armed conflicts in the Armed Forces of our Country, without the right to vote for their Commander in Chief, including many of them by dying in these conflicts.
- WHEREAS:** In 1952, the United States American Citizens of Puerto Rico constituted themselves into a Republican form of government in compliance with Article IV, Section 4, Constitution of the United States of America, similarly as the process used for former territories to become states of the Nation. In the Constitution of 1952, the citizens by direct vote swore their loyalty to their United States American citizenship, to the Constitution the United States of America and accepted to be under the Supremacy Clause of the Constitution, with reference to the National Government as are states under federalism.
- WHEREAS:** The United States American Citizens of Puerto Rico are subject to the jurisdiction of all three Branches of the Government of the United States of America. The Puerto Rico Federal Courts are Article III of the U.S. Constitution.
- WHEREAS:** All income from sources outside of Puerto Rico is subject to federal taxation, and the United States American Citizens residing in Puerto Rico contribute billions of dollars to the Federal Treasury paying more in federal taxes than residents of various regions in the fifty states without representation.
- WHEREAS:** In the quadrennial elections, held since 1964, ninety five percent (95%) or more of the voters have chosen permanent union with the United States of America. The independence has been rejected by the voters to such an extent that the Independence Party has been politically disqualified in quadrennial election.
- WHEREAS:** Two of the local political parties, supported by more than ninety six percent (96%) of the total voters, participate in National Politics as members of the Republican and Democratic Parties.
- WHEREAS:** The Government of the United States of America has been actively promoting democracy, universal suffrage, and human rights all over the world. (Presently very actively un Venezuela).
- WHEREAS:** The U.S. Constitution has been judicially applied to the American Citizens of Puerto Rico as if it were a state, but the non-incorporation status is being used by the Federal Courts and by Congress to switch "on and off" its applicability discriminatorily, costing more than ten billion dollars annually in federal transfers.
- WHEREAS:** Puerto Rico is a de facto incorporated territory of the United States because since 1898 it has been gradually moved to be legally treated and assimilated like a state more than any other U.S. Territory before being certified as incorporated. Moreover, the degree of incorporation of Puerto Rico to be like a state can be considered by implication as strong as to exclude any other view than that it is an incorporated territory of the United States. (See, *Consejo de Salud Playa de Ponce v Rullan*, 588, FS 2nd 22 (2008)). It has met all the requirements adopted for the Northwestern Ordinance.
- WHEREAS:** The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States guarantees the right of the American Citizens to "... petition the Government for a redress of grievances ..." in order to ensure liberty, general welfare, and to protect their rights and privileges as American Citizens.
- WHEREAS:** It is the duty of Congress to protect the constitutional rights of all American citizens. The present degree of legal assimilation of Puerto Rico to the United States under domestic and international law supports this Petition to certify it as an incorporated territory of the United States in transit to statehood.

**THEREFORE:**

I, an American Citizen resident of Puerto Rico, respectfully request Congress to adopt a Resolution certifying Puerto Rico as an Incorporated Territory of the United States in transit to statehood.

Signed this April / 2 / 2021



PETITIONER SIGNATURE

Box 3911, Aguadilla, Puerto Rico 00805

ADDRESS

(787) 891-9040 - Office (787) 379-5095 - Cellular

TELEPHONE

bufeteigartua@yahoo.com

E-MAIL



The United States Conference of Mayors  
1620 EYE STREET, NORTHWEST  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006  
TELEPHONE (202) 293-7330  
FAX (202) 293-2352  
URI: [www.usmayors.org](http://www.usmayors.org)

87th Annual Meeting  
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Puerto Rico as an Incorporated Territory of the  
United States

WHEREAS, Puerto Rico became a United States of America territory in 1898 by the Treaty of Paris, which provided that: "... the civil rights and political status of the native inhabitants of the territories hereby ceded to the United States shall be determined by Congress." Immediately the native inhabitants became Nationals under the Custody and "Parens Patriae" of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, Since 1917, The United States American Citizens of Puerto Rico have demonstrated their loyalty to the United States of America and to democracy by serving with dedication and honor in all armed conflicts in the Armed Forces of our Country, without the right to vote for their Commander in Chief, including many of them by dying in these conflicts; and

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**WHEREAS**, In 1917, the residents of Puerto Rico were granted United States American citizenship, by their own free and voluntary election, and after 1941 by birth, as disposed by Congress, enacting laws to such effect. To this date, three point four millions United States American Citizens reside in Puerto Rico and four millions have moved their residence to the mainland, were they have worked and are still working in building our Nation; and

**WHEREAS**, In 1952, The United States American Citizens of Puerto Rico constituted themselves into a Republican form of government in compliance with Article IV, Section 4, Constitution of the United States of America, similarly as the process used for former territories to become states of the Nation. In the Constitution of 1952, the citizens by direct vote swore their loyalty to their United States American citizenship, to the Constitution of United States of America and accepted to be under the Supremacy Clause of the Constitution, with reference to the National Government as are states under federalism; and

**WHEREAS**, The United States American Citizens of Puerto Rico are subject to the jurisdiction of all three Branches of the Government of the United States of America. The Puerto Federal Courts are Article III of the U.S. Constitution; and

WHEREAS, All income from sources outside of Puerto Rico is subject to federal taxation, and the United States American Citizens residing in Puerto Rico contribute billions of dollars to the Federal Treasury. The United States American Citizens residing in Puerto Rico pay more in federal taxes than residents of various regions in the fifty states; and

WHEREAS, In the quadrennial elections, held since 1964 ninety five percent (95%) or more of the voters have chosen permanent union with The United States of America. The independence has been rejected by the voters to such an extent that the Independence Party has been politically disqualified in quadrennial election; and

WHEREAS, Two of the local political parties, supported by more than ninety six percent (96%) of the total voters, participate in National Politics as members of the Republican and Democratic Parties; and

WHEREAS, The Government of the United States of America has been actively promoting democracy, universal suffrage, and human rights all over the world. (Presently very actively un Venezuela); and

WHEREAS, The Constitution of the United States of America has been judicially applied to the United States American Citizens of Puerto Rico as if it were



a state, but the non-incorporation status is being used by the Federal Courts and by Congress to switch "on and off" the applicability of the U.S. Constitution discriminatory, costing more than five billion dollars annually in federal transfers; and

WHEREAS, Puerto Rico is a de facto incorporated territory of the United States of America, because since 1898 it has been gradually moved to be legally treated and assimilated like a state more than any other U.S. Territory before being certified as incorporated. Moreover, the degree of incorporation of Puerto Rico to be like a state can be considered by implication as strong as to exclude any other view than that it is an incorporated territory of the United States; and

WHEREAS, The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America guarantees the right of United States American Citizens to u... petition the Government for a redress of grievances ... " in order to ensure liberty, general welfare, and to protect our rights and privileges as United States of America Citizens; and

WHEREAS: It is the duty of Congress to protect the constitutional rights of all American citizens. The present degree of legal assimilation of Puerto Rico to the United States under domestic and international law supports this Petition to certify it as an incorporated territory of the United States,

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NOW IT THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the members of The U.S. Conference of Mayors, respectfully request Congress to adopt a Resolution certifying Puerto Rico as an Incorporated Territory of the United States. Copies of this document will be forwarded to the following Federal and States Public Bodies, and/or other parties; President of the United States America, Hon. Donald Trump; Vice President of the United States of America, Hon. Michael R. Pence; Speaker of the United States of America House of Representatives, Hon. Nancy Pelosi; Governor of Puerto Rico, Hon. Ricardo Rossello; and, to the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico, Hon. Jennifer Gonzalez.

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**The Honorable Raúl Grijalva**  
Chairman, House Committee on Natural  
Resources

**The Honorable Bruce Westerman**  
Ranking Member, House Committee on  
Natural Resources

Dear Chairman Grijalva, Ranking Member Westerman:

Puerto Rico has been a territory for more than 500 years, first of Spain and now of the United States. Therefore, it should not be foreign to our will that the status is an issue that moves Puerto Ricans. As a result of the discussion on the status, five (5) plebiscites have been held to decide between the options of Statehood (annexation), Independence (separation) or Commonwealth (current status), as well as the approval of evaluation committees on the status of Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico became a possession of the United States as a result of the Spanish-American War, which culminated in the Treaty of Paris of December 10, 1898 between Spain and the United States. The Treaty of Paris set a precedent, as it was the first time that the United States acquired territories without the intention of making them states. The expansionist policy of the United States in the 19th century, before the Spanish-American War, reflected a theory: that of incorporation as a territory in preparation for statehood. All territories acquired multiplied their original population and dissipated borders with a view to integrating them as members of the American nation. The Treaty of Paris provided that the political conditions and civil rights to be conferred on the territories acquired under the treaty would be determined by Congress. This idea practiced by the United States in the colonization of Puerto Rico was contrary to the value it preached as a Nation, since it was precisely on those principles that it based its independence.

The Foraker Act of 1900 formally represented the non-incorporation of the territory as a state, thus granting greater powers to Congress and the President to administer the territory. This unequal treatment over the other states of the nation led to the argument that Puerto Rico was treated as territory and not as part of the union. Under this premise and through the insular cases of *Downes v. Bidwell* (1901) and *De Lima v. Bidwell* (1901), and later in the case of *Balzac v. People of Puerto Rico* (1922), the legal creature of the United States Congress, the so-called "unincorporated territory" was established and validated, maintaining as a foundation that we belong to, but are not part of the United States. This doctrine was validated by Associate Justice Edward Douglass White in his opinion offered in the case of *Downes v. Bidwell*, for the controversy that asserted whether it was constitutional for Congress to impose through the Foraker Act a tariff on trade between Puerto Rico and the continental United States, in light of the Uniformity Clause. Justice White's opinion held as follows:

*"The result of what has been said is that in an international sense Porto Rico was not a foreign country, since it was subject to the sovereignty of was owned by the United States,*

*it was foreign to the United States in a domestic sense, because the island has not been incorporated into the United States but was merely appurtenant thereto as a possession."*

The great changes resulting from the military conflicts between the countries of Western Europe, and the intervention of the United States in these conflicts, led to changes in the civil and political order in Puerto Rico. President William Howard Taft took the initiative to propose the granting of American citizenship for Puerto Rico, which culminated in the filing of the Jones-Shaforth bill, which was finally approved in the House of Representatives on May 23, 1916. It then passed the Senate on February 20, 1917 and was finally signed by President Woodrow Wilson on March 2, 1917. This bill was the product of great controversy, due to the conditions that were imposed, since it would grant citizenship without the character of admitting Puerto Rico as a state.

This act leads us to argue about the violation of the value of equal treatment of American citizens. The first violation we must recognize is not having the right to vote for those members of Congress who pass federal laws that apply to Puerto Rico, not having fair representation in Congress, and not being able to vote for the President of the United States. Recognizing what is expressed in Articles 1 and 2 of the U.S. Constitution, we must recognize that in interpreting the articles there is a clear basis for political discrimination against U.S. citizens residing in Puerto Rico. Articles 1 and 2 of the U.S. Constitution provide that:

*Article 1, Section 2. "The House of Representatives shall consist of members elected every two years by the inhabitants of the several States, and the electors shall possess in each State the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branches of the local legislature."*

*Article 1, Section 3. "The Senate of the United States shall consist of two Senators from each State, elected for six years by the legislature thereof, and each Senator shall have one vote."*

[...]

*Article 2, Section 1: "The executive power is hereby vested in a President of the United States. He shall hold office for a term of four years, and shall, together with the Vice President appointed for the same term, be chosen as follows:*

*Each State shall appoint, in such manner as its legislature may direct, a number of electors equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in Congress, but no Senator, Representative, or person holding an honorary or salaried office of the United States, shall be appointed an elector."*

Interpreting what is expressed in the Constitution of the United States, this closes the doors to the millions of Puerto Ricans residing on the island, to have full equality as the rest of their fellow citizens, by applying federal laws without the consent of the governed, with the argument that the right to vote will be recognized only to the residents of the states.

As a result of this issue, legal analyses have emerged that result in the deprivation of the right to equality for American citizens residing on the island. Under the colonial condition imposed on us and not being a state, Puerto Rico does not have the right to the electoral college because the

territories do not meet the requirements established by Amendment XIV, which establishes that: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof are citizens of the United States and of the States in which they reside. [...]", so the territories are not part of the United States for constitutional purposes.

Under this premise presented by the Congress, we allude to international law on the establishment of the "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" ratified by the General Assembly in its resolution 2200 A (XXI) of December 16, 1966, which in its Article 3 mentions: "*The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights set forth in the present Covenant*", as well as in its Article 25, which states:

*All citizens shall enjoy, without any of the distinctions mentioned in Article 2, and without undue restrictions, the following rights and opportunities:*

*(a) To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives.*

*(b) To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors;*

*(c) To have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in their country.*

Under the Treaty of Paris, the Congress of the United States is granted plenary powers over the territory, and it was provided that it would have the responsibility not only to determine the civil rights, but also the political status of its inhabitants. In this matter we must mention that Congress has not taken forceful action to define Puerto Rico's status under the regimes of international law and the U.S. Constitution.

These rights began to be discussed after the approval of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948, adopted by the United Nations (UN). This declaration emphasizes the equality of rights that all human beings should enjoy. Article 2 states: "No distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be an independent country, a territory under trusteeship, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty. By this declaration Puerto Ricans residing on the island should have equal rights and duties as citizens residing in one of the fifty (50) states.

This statement has been used as an argument to establish that Puerto Rico is already fully defined after the approval of Act 600, which gave way to the creation of the Commonwealth on July 25, 1952. We must mention that the precedents set in cases subsequent to the creation of the Commonwealth create ambiguity in the fact that Congress continues to have plenary powers over and above the sovereignty that was recognized to Puerto Rico in 1952. The final determination made by the Supreme Court in the case of *Puerto Rico v. Sanchez-Valle*, and the establishment of the PROMESA Act, which creates the Fiscal Oversight Board, demonstrate the permanence of Puerto Rico as a territory subject to the plenary powers of congress, which violates international agreements on the self-determination of peoples and the value of equal rights.

One of the flaws that we can identify about our civil and political order is the lack of recognition of the vote for the President of the United States, and equal representation in Congress therefore we don't have equal justice under the law. The articulated premise, has been in other jurisdictions, as in the case of Washington DC, the product of legal actions to grant equal right of representation and presidential vote for its citizens. In the case of Washington DC, the decision of the Human Rights Commission was forceful when it concluded that the fundamental rights of American citizens are above any law that limits them.

To address the status issue, regarding the feasibility of integrating presidential voting rights into the current political relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico, studies have been conducted and status review committees have been presented. On July 25, 1962, the then President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, in his response to a letter from then Governor Luis Muñoz Marín, affirmed the need to consult the people of Puerto Rico on their preference regarding their political status formula.

As a result of this exchange, the Government of Puerto Rico submitted to the Legislative Assembly a bill ordering the holding of a referendum. Public hearings were held for six weeks in which approximately 80 people testified. The discussion of the bill concluded in the need to clarify the definition of the Commonwealth before holding a referendum and the need to obtain a declaration from Congress on the formula it is willing to approve in order to hold a meaningful and binding referendum.

Pursuant thereto, H.R. 5945 is approved, with the purpose of establishing a Commission to study the Agreement between the United States and Puerto Rico. The Commission would be composed of twelve (12) members, four appointed by the President of the United States, four by the Governor of Puerto Rico, two by the President of the United States Senate, and two by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Bill H.R. 5945, when passed, became Public Law 88-271. Among its considerations, the committee contemplated the issue of equal rights and conditions for Puerto Rico to have the right to vote for the President of the United States, which gave it political power and greater importance in the national affairs of the island.

Finally, we would like to allude to the Constitution of the United States, where in its preamble establishes the expression "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, ensure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America".

This declaration marks the core value of the nation's constitution and the intent by which it is created. The cases brought to abolish slavery in the nation, as well as other movements such as the suffragettes petitioning for women's right to vote, used this consensus to argue that the term "We the people" refers to the inclusion of all American citizens in the rights outlined in the U.S. Constitution.

Therefore, we believe it is meritorious to take action on what this resolution proposes, to promote equal rights and social justice for U.S. citizens residing in Puerto Rico, so that they may enjoy the

right to vote for the president of the United States. It is important that the U.S. Congress take action on the referred case and enforce the rights of the Constitution for all U.S. citizens equally.

The bills before the House Committee on Natural Resources, chaired by Congressman Grijalva, allude to taking action in favor of the freedom of determination of the people of Puerto Rico on the future of their relationship with the United States. Certainly, the guarantee of the right to self-determination of the people of Puerto Rico has been guaranteed in all the processes of expression of the people through the various plebiscites held since 1967, until the last one held on November 3, 2020. But in order for the value of the people's right to self-determination to be realized, Congress has the duty to take action in favor of the democratic expression of Puerto Ricans residing on the island.

HR 1522, introduced by our only congressional representative, Jenniffer Gonzalez, and Congressman Darren Soto, for consideration by the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, sets precedents in the history of the admission of territories as a state of the union. It also ensures concrete action on the mandate sent by the people of Puerto Rico last November 3 favoring statehood, with the ratification of the results and the approval of the President of the United States.

In contrast to HR 2070, presented by Congresswomen Nydia Velázquez and Alexandria Ocasio, who present a bill that seeks the creation of a status convention that is unprecedented in the processes of admission of territories to the nation, and historically only the colonies that have wished to betray themselves towards the formation of an independent Republic, have accepted it.

With much respect to this Congress and members of the House Committee on Natural Resources, I submit that HR2070 does not represent the will of the people and I request that it not be taken into consideration. The only piece of legislation that provides the tools for the advancement of the Puerto Rican people and that represents the will of the majority of the Puerto Rican people is HR1522.

Sincerely,

Ricardo Marrero-Passapera  
Candidate  
Puerto Rico  
Congressional Delegation



DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF PUERTO RICO

April 6, 2021

The Honorable Joaquin Castro  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Castro:

We write to you as leaders of the Democratic Party of Puerto Rico to respectfully request that you not further support H.R. 2070 – a bill that disrespects the people of Puerto Rico and their self-determination, including their choice of equality as Americans. We assume you supported this bill in good faith. We join our new Democratic Governor, Pedro Pierluisi, who previously served eight years in the U.S. House in opposing this undemocratic bill.

Last year, Puerto Rico's elected representatives approved a law for a plebiscite on statehood, a vote conducted by many territories that became States. Held along with November's 2020 general elections, virtually as many people voted in the plebiscite as voted for any local public office. The participation percentage was greater than similar votes in many territories. A solid majority voted for statehood after vigorous campaigns for and against it. The plebiscite followed two other status votes held in 2012 and 2017 that included all of the status options Congress' committees and successive administrations have said are possible. Majorities chose statehood in those votes as well. *There can be no purer self-determination process than the people voting on questions posed by their elected representatives.*

- H.R. 2070 would ignore the free and fair votes of Puerto Ricans, upheld by the Federal court as well as the insular Supreme Court. It attempts to pressure the territory into conducting a status process that the Government of Puerto Rico has declined to adopt for decades. *Democrats respect democratic election results and should respect Puerto Rico's self-determination as well.*
- The bill's process can include status proposals that are not possible, prolonging the territory status the people specifically voted against in 2012 and that H.R. 2070 purportedly wants to replace. Impossible proposals have confused the issue, preventing resolution. The bill's House author has written that the options can include independence, free association (nationhood in an association with the U.S. that either nation can end), "and any other non-territorial status". *The committees of jurisdiction of both houses of Congress and successive administrations have repeatedly determined that there can be no other option than statehood, independence and free association.*
- The bill proposes a congressional commission to make recommendations to Puerto Rico on its culture, language, and other matters as a State or a nation that are not within the jurisdiction of the U.S. Government under the Constitution and international law. *This would be anti-Latinx, offensive, colonial, xenophobic, and cultural imperialism: all of which are unthinkable for Democrats.*



- The bill would amend many Federal laws as unilaterally drafted by a convention in Puerto Rico without the committees of jurisdiction of either house in Congress being able consider the changes or Congress being able to amend the legislation. *Both houses would effectively be forced by the bill's rules changes to vote up or down on the Puerto Rico-drafted changes in Federal laws.*
- The bill could change Puerto Rico's status to one that is not the first choice of a majority of the territory's voters and one with even less votes than a plurality choice. *The territory's status should be a majority first choice.*
- The bill's status convention could be called by Puerto Rico's legislature without the enactment of a law in the territory, ignoring the Governor in this process. *It would be disrespectful and undemocratic for Congress to disregard the elected Governor of the territory.*
- The members of the bill's convention would serve indefinitely without having to face re-election no matter how long the bill's process takes. *Elected officials serving indefinite terms is undemocratic.*

These are just some of the deficiencies. *Most important, the bill would set aside the absolute majority choice of Puerto Ricans – Americans by birth – for equality within our Nation. It attempts to thwart our self-determination and impose a choice process on Puerto Ricans, suppressing the majority vote. It would allow for an outcome that would perpetuate a colonial status under which Puerto Rico is treated worse than a State, precluded from having votes in the government that makes its local laws when that government so wishes as well as votes in making the laws to which the whole Nation is bound.*

Please do not further support the mockery of self-determination reflected in H.R. 2070.

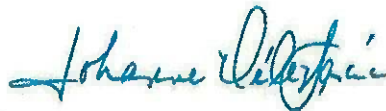
By contrast, we and the Governor of Puerto Rico support H.R 1522 by Representative Darren Soto and 57 others. We ask you to support this bill that respects Puerto Ricans, democracy, and self-determination.

With deepest thanks for your consideration of the request of the majority of the people of Puerto Rico, we are,

Sincerely,



Charles A. Rodríguez  
Chair  
Democratic Party of Puerto Rico



Johanne Vélez  
Vice Chair  
Democratic Party of Puerto Rico



María "Mayita" Meléndez  
Committeewoman from Puerto Rico  
Democratic National Committee



Luis Dávila-Pernas  
Committeeman from Puerto Rico  
Democratic National Committee

Dear HOUSE COMMITTEE NATURAL RESOURCES GOP

Puerto Rico already voted for statehood in the 2020 Plebiscite, as a way to demand from Congress equality (with the responsibilities that come with it) and full democracy, i.e. equal rights, voting rights, equal representation. Our families are being fragmented while our young people go to the nation looking for better job opportunities. We want those same opportunities to be found on the island where they were born. #PRStatehood

Blanca Córdova  
Toa Baja, PR