

## Dennis Freytes

“Patriots call to Arms-Equality for a more perfect Union!”

-PR Status Bill draft (MAY 2022) must be improved!-

US Citizens-Veterans in the US Territory of Puerto Rico have no Federal consent of the Governed (since 1898)! Thus, a draft bill called the Puerto Rico Status Act, brought forth by Majority Leader Hoyer, is a step in the right direction! A proper bill is crucial because the US Congress, in over 125 years, has not let Puerto Ricans (US Citizens-US Veterans)-part of “We the People” --Vote to resolve this Federal inequality that strikes at the heart of our Republican Government with a (We the People) Representative Democracy where the Power resides with all the People; not just some.

Overall, the PR Status Act (draft) allows a Vote to end Federal inequality... BUT, it can't compromise with what the US Constitution and good reasonable sense will allow; has some confusing parts that “doublespeak” or tries to have it both ways (like ELA-Soberano in disguise or Independence-- with US Citizenship & benefits for Life) that might not be viable, per our US Constitution; US Supreme Court Decisions, standing Law or other Reports. Thus, some reasonable analysis and suggestions are:

1. The draft bill wrongly “doublespeak's”, under Independence and Independence with Pact of Free Association first says – “Puerto Rico has full authority and responsibility over its citizenship and immigration laws, and birth in Puerto Rico or relationship to persons with statutory United States citizenship by birth in the former territory shall cease to be a basis for United States nationality or citizenship, “

Then turns around (On what authority?) to state--

“...except that persons who have such United States citizenship have a right to retain United States nationality and citizenship for life, by entitlement or election as provided by Federal law.”

\*\*On what authority does the US Congress makes a non-permanent statutory US Citizenship and benefits for “Life”? The US Congress-- is not above the US Constitution to exceed its authority or be misleading-confusing...; shouldn't, for political distorted purposes, jeopardize the legality of the Plebiscite and its outcome... Summary of some FACTS are:

- The US Congress has the right under the US Constitution, to amend or change any Laws or Codes it makes. A future Congress can do likewise.
- The Territorial Clause and Insular Cases, and the 1917 Jones Act that define statutory US Citizenship, Federal Laws, and the protection of the US Constitution-- ENDS upon Independence where PR is no longer a US Territory...
- There are US Supreme Court Decisions that indicate or imply that the US Congress has the right to not fully apply the US Constitution to “unincorporated” US Territories) like Puerto Rico... except for some broad rights that are not defined... (See

Enclosure below)

- There is no “Group” dual US Citizenship in our US Constitution (even though, to an extent, “Individual” dual Citizenship is permitted...).
- A Nation can't be independent with the Citizenship of another Nation. (See Enclosure below).

Thus, to state statutory Citizenship and benefits are for “Life” is misleading...BESIDES-- Also, buried later in page 39, it states that US Citizenship benefits would continue under Independence-Free Association. “RIGHTS AND BENEFITS. – All vested rights and benefits which accrue to residents of the territory of Puerto Rico under the laws of the United States from past services or contributions... shall not be interrupted after the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association but will continue...” (Again, on what authority...? All US Laws; benefits end upon Independence...)

Thus, the Status and Benefits descriptions of Independence or Independence with a Pact of Free Association should be correctly worded to reflect the above and below enclosure-FACTS. Also, Statehood can be better described. Example:

- STATEHOOD MEANS: Admission to our diverse “UNION of STATES” – with OWN-- STATE Identity; Constitution; Flag; Sovereignty; EQUAL/ permanent US Citizenship with full rights, benefits, and responsibilities... (as other States and other US Citizens-US Veterans have).
- INDEPENDENCE- MEANS: Puerto Rican National Sovereignty with PR Constitution & PR Citizenship; gradual loss of statutory US Citizenship, Rights, and Benefits... “Puerto Rico has full authority and responsibility over its citizenship and immigration laws, and birth in Puerto Rico or relationship to persons with statutory United States citizenship by birth in the former territory shall cease to be a basis for United States nationality or citizenship, “
- INDEPENDENCE with PACT of Free Association- MEANS: Puerto Rican National Sovereignty with PR Constitution & PR Citizenship; gradual loss of statutory US Citizenship, Rights, and Benefits; a negotiated PACT (on Defense, Trade, Finance,...) that can be terminated by either side. Puerto Rico has full authority and responsibility over its citizenship and immigration laws, and birth in Puerto Rico or relationship to persons with statutory United States citizenship by birth in the former territory shall cease to be a basis for United States nationality or citizenship, “

2. Change the Ballot order- place Statehood first (since it has received the most Votes in local Plebiscites).
3. In order to avoid confusion...change “Sovereignty in Free Association w/US” to a better clear description that is- “Independence with a PACT of Free Association”. (Remember, Free Association is not a Status, but, the name of a PACT.)
4. Millions of statutory US Citizens residing in the States have a stake in the fight since they have a statutory non-permanent US Citizenship; could lose it., but they can't Vote in the Plebiscite. Even though, the draft says that statutory US Citizens will keep their US Citizenship for life under Independence-Free Association, but, their Kids will

not... (which can be misleading or questionable). Thus, we should have a say! Plus, it should be added to the draft something to the effect: "Statutory US Citizens, residing in the States, will be naturalized, per the 14th Amendment, should Independence or Independence with Free Association win, since the US Constitution & all US Laws will end..."

\*There is NO authority in the US Constitution for the US Congress to pass a statutory US Citizenship to an Independent Nation!

\*The Territorial Clause, Insular Cases, nor the 1917 Jones Act will not be in effect upon Independence, thus, statutory US Citizenship will end. (See other facts above and in the below enclosure.)

5. In the Draft, under Independence-Free Association, there are many instances where it mandates what the US Constitution of PR must contain...; what a PR Independent Government must do... On what Authority can the Federal Government make mandates to an Independent Nation?

The facts should be taken into consideration in the final PR Status Act Bill. Please, see Enclosure. THANKS!

Dennis O. Freytes (MPA, MHR, BBA), Officer US Army Retired  
Florida Veterans Hall of Fame; Community Servant Leader; former PMS-  
Professor/Commander USA Officer School, University of Puerto Rico; Commander of  
Infantry, Special Forces, Airborne, PACCE (Medical and Engineer Units)...; Civic/Board  
Advisor to a US President, Governors, Mayors...

ENCLOSURES-Researched-- truth, facts, analysis, and sources

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### **Michael Torres**

I think the Draft is a good step towards the process but I believe an option should be included to also include the Puerto Rican Diaspora on the process as they have also been affected by the difficult situation in regards to status that Puerto Rico has been facing and if God forbid any tragedy occurs, they are the ones to respond and provide help and support to their brethren in the Island. The Puerto Rican Diaspora has also been very influential on making sure Puerto Rico's voice is heard on the process, therefore due to all these reasons I believe the Diaspora should be taken into consideration for any vote on the Status of the Island.

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## **Zayira Jordan**

Reason and facts are the realm of academicians, scientists. Political gain and, ultimately, permanence in power is the sound of music for politicians. But where has that left us, we, the people, those of us who conform the demographic otherwise known as the US citizens who live in Puerto Rico?

The result of rivers of ink has ultimately been poverty and lack of opportunities for the majority. Not only our people is condemned to preserve life and health in a substandard society, not living but rather surviving, but we are also excluded the opportunities promised by our Constitution that We the People may "Secure the Blessings of Liberty."

Before our Congress, the Congress of the United States of America, I enter a plea on behalf of the majority of the US Citizens who call Puerto Rico home that the ladies and gentlemen who represent We The People, intact, as a whole, without artificial separations, acknowledge exactly that. That the situation in Puerto Rico is untenable. That for more than a hundred and twenty years, there has been and us and a them. That the US Citizens of Puerto Rico have been kept separate under the rule of the law, excluded from the American Dream, unable to pursue in the land we were born the very same dream promised and available to We the People in the 50 states that conform the Union.

Our mandate has not been honored thereby denying the exigency that our vote be acted on, that Congress enacts our will, and that once and for all Puerto Rico is admitted as a State of the United States of America.

Reasons to act with justice, there are plentiful. Legalities, facts and figures are copious in the matter of documenting the inequalities withstood by the US Citizens of Puerto Rico. History demands We the People honor the values upheld in our Bill of Rights that the satisfaction of justice being served rather drives their representatives, elected through a vote that constitutes the democratic mandate, to recognize our vote for statehood and act swiftly to make Puerto Rico a state.

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## **Jayson Velazquez**

There should be conversation on the role of the Diaspora in this process. There also

needs to be some clause to hold the United States responsible and pay reparations for austerity and the manufacturing of Puerto Rico's economic and climate crises.

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**Antonio Diaz**

Hello,

I am not following the language below. What does a majority vote required mean, more than 50%? If not, why would there be a runoff? I infer the majority refers to more than 50%, but this needs to be more explicit in the bill.

"(3) MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED. – Approval of a status option must be by a majority of the valid votes cast.

(4) RUNOFF PLEBISCITE. – If there is not a majority in favor of one of the three options defined in this Act, then a runoff plebiscite shall be held on March 3, 2024, which shall offer eligible voters a choice of the two options that received the most of votes in the plebiscite held under paragraph (1)."

Thanks,

Antonio (Puerto Rican living in Virginia)

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**Edmundo Quinones**

This is a good beginning to resolve the status question of Puerto Rico. Please support this bill. Puerto Rico is the world's few lingering colonies. If you support freedom and individual's right to self determination, support this bill.

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**TIMOTHY FRANK**

Puerto Rico is the World's Oldest Colony. The Declaration of Independence of the United States of America is clear, in order to be a just and lawful Government abide by the following principles: "--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted

among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --". Puerto Rico has never had the opportunity to give its "CONSENT".

The United Nations Charter and the United Nations statement on Human Rights affirm:

"PART I

Article 1

1. All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development."

How the United States of America, founding Member of the United Nations, has been able to get away with holding Puerto Rico as the World's Oldest Colony defies reason. Puerto Rico lacks the ability to Self Determine their status in the World and the Status of it's people. Puerto Rico is the United States of America's Greatest Sin and the worst kept "Dirty little secret".

How can the United States of America look at Russia with a straight face and say: "You can't take Ukraine as a Colony" while holding Puerto Rico as a Colony? The United States cannot claim the moral high ground here. As long as the United States of America keeps Puerto Rico as a Colony, what is to stop Russia from taking Ukraine, or China taking Taiwan, or North Korea taking South Korea? All would be a violation of the Human Right of Self Determination which the United States of America has no problem of doing, while condemning others for doing.

Please right this wrong. It's immortal. It's unjust. It's indefensible.

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## **Arivel Figueroa**

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Arivel Figueroa, I'm the director of the Committee on Federal and International Relations, Status and Veterans Affairs of the Puerto Rico House of Representatives. This committee has been doing public hearings on different proposals on PR's status and we think it will be a great opportunity for the PR's Status Act Draft to be part of the work we've been doing in the committee.

Therefore, we would like to extend an invite to Chairman Grijalva and the natural resources committee to collaborate in creating an open space for the evaluation and discussion process you're starting in June. We have the resources and space for you to

do the public hearings and the discussions of the draft. We would like to be a part as well.

Please let us know if this is possible, and don't hesitate to contact us.

Thank you.  
Sincerely,  
AFA

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### **Abraham Arce**

I want independence for Puerto Rico.

We are a separate culture with different history, language, and leaders. We don't share any history with exception of military service that was forced on us for all conflicts USA has had in the last hundred years.

We do not consider Abraham Lincoln or George Washington our forefathers. We have our own history, leaders and no connection to USA.

Again, independence is the only sensible outcome to our colonialism status.

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### **Michael Santiago**

This bill will affect the legal status of any U.S. citizen born in Puerto Rico but living in a U.S. State; therefore, U.S. citizens born in Puerto Rico but living in U.S. States must be allowed to vote by mail in the plebiscite. Otherwise, the status of U.S. citizens born in Puerto Rico but living in U.S. States will lie entirely in the hands of others, thus denying U.S. citizens born in Puerto Rico but living in U.S. States the right to consent and self-determination.

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### **Valerie Rogers**

Another question: If a child is born in the US to parents of a different nationality (say Mexico for example) that child automatically becomes a U.S. citizen. Even if the child is taken away by it's Mexican National parents to be raised and educated in Mexico. So, it

stands to reason that anyone born in the US would retain their citizenship. For those born in PR and already US citizens it would seem they would retain their citizenship, while possibly those born after independence would not be US citizens. Many US citizens were born in PR and moved as children or after serving in the military to the US mainland. They may have paid into SS and Medicare their whole work life so it would stand to reason their citizenship and resulting benefits would be remain in place. How would that play out?

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### **Joel R**

"Specifies and defines Puerto Rico's non-territorial status options – Statehood, Independence, and Sovereignty in Free Association with the United States. "

This language is sleazy. That "third option" was purposefully crafted to be confused with non-independence. Sovereignty in Free Association sounds like non-independence and essentially like the current status quo. Even the media I consume has required those reporting to verify that this option is not the status quo because it is clearly intended to be confused with the status quo. Those proposing this third option know Puerto Ricans would NEVER vote for independence if it was clearly articulated as such. Tricking them into it might have a higher chance. It must not be 3 options because Sovereignty in Free Association is dependent on choosing option 2. Be clear. Make it a 2 option vote and then a followup vote if PRicans choose independence, THEN they can choose to have the compact of free association or not as a second vote.

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### **Armando Perez**

I believe that the essential choice is between statehood and independence. To include independence with a free association treaty amongst the choices for the initial referendum is to put the cart before the horse.

We should first decide if we want sovereignty in or out of the US. Only if the answer is out should we then discuss the possibility of having or not having a treaty. I believe this makes the most sense, this order of operation. But the draft as written is better than nothing, so I'd get over this.

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## Jean C. Delgado Algarin

Being born and raised in Puerto Rico, I've seen the disaster of big government, monarchical government in definition and practical approach, and there needs to be a total and radical change in our system as a whole. As a fellow US Marine veteran and constituent that has dedicated himself to self education, especially regarding constitutional rights and in this particular case, the status of my island of Puerto Rico, I have to input on the following. Since the Insular Cases (1900-1922) we have been a non-incorporated territory still to the day (meaning it cannot be a state unless it actually incorporates, otherwise Alaska and Hawaii wouldn't have had achieved their statehood since in the definition of the SCOTUS; incorporated territory is such those that are on clear path for statehood). Free association; we've seen precedents following the case of Palau Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and the Marshall Islands, but here is the main detail. All of the above had to declare and proclaim full independence and then later on agree to accord a free association pact with the US, and none of them had nor kept US citizenship since it's not viable in the eyes of the US Constitution to have on a group basis a dual citizenship, only on an individual level.

In addition, let's talk about independence: such option has never been supported, nor will it ever have even a 1/6-1/3 electoral support to simple majority, because the majority of Puertoricans (including the descendants of those that moved to the mainland since the 1940s exodus) value and treasure the US citizenship. If independence was so clearly supported, then how come we have over an approximate of 6 million Puertoricans and descendants living in the mainland vs the barely 3 million living in the island? Must be good to be a natural born citizen with all the guaranteed rights of the US constitution.

Also, not to mention, the statehood option: Sadly the island in some aspects is like a state, but in a good majority it still keeps the bad governmentally organizational setting from the Spaniards that needs to be eradicated, by that I refer to the centralized form of government, rather limited and secluded from state to counties and towns within the counties. Part of the collapse is just the fact of having municipalities relying on the state budget to make up their budget, rather consolidating an x amount of municipalities/towns, for example 5-6 of those into a county, to which the county collects the local/property/county taxes in order to make their own budget and administration. We have an internal mess in that aspect, and we need a good adjustment period to perfect it the way it runs in most states. Since the island doesn't pay federal taxes, but benefits from the welfare state that is funded by federal tax paying dollars, I support putting the island under incorporated territory for a small window of time, so

the government and the people can start making the necessary adjustments for statehood.

Such adjustments for statehood would be: requiring more than 2 hours of English teaching in our schools in order to establish a unique bilingual population, decentralizing the government in its entirety in order to create stable and balanced state budget, unite a couple municipalities (taking reference the police districts) to make the counties and assign county commissioners, county police, county education regions, county sheriff, etc. Make the necessary amendments to the state constitution such as: regulating the seat of the governor, legislature, city mayors, and all elected officials, and not infringe on the second amendment right that has been infringed for many decades in Puerto Rico in order to fight criminality and pursue natural justice. Also, in order to advance towards the cause of statehood, the laws that defend fiscal paradises for foreigners and people from the mainland US needs to be repealed, because in every society you cannot give everything to the outsider while you squeeze the juice out of the one person in their own backyard, it is unfair and undignified.

Point here taken is this: neither independence/free association can guarantee us equality under the law (citizenship under the US Constitution), only statehood can, even by being completely an incorporated territory on the path towards statehood. If a plebiscite is to be voted on, only put statehood and independence, because you need independence to get to free association, not the other way around. If such plebiscite goes as planned, and statehood is the winning vote, initiate an immediate incorporation mechanism for a minimum of 5, maximum 10 years in order for us to get all our local and state issues in order, so we can be able to enter the Union as a well economically stable and prosper state. I favor statehood personally, but my island is in dire need of being out on the right path for such transition, and our elected officials do not do anything about it while bragging nonstop about pushing this forward. I may not be a Harvard man, or college graduate, but my tools are historical precedents and the Constitution of this great nation, follow the rule of law, not the agenda of whoever is in power to meet their party goal.

Thank you very much for allowing me to give an input.

Respectfully sent  
-Jean C. Delgado Algarin  
US Marine Veteran

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## **Carmen Cadilla**

It is time that Congress considers the political future of US Citizens who live in the island of Puerto Rico. Our colonial status has to end. We need to have our voices heard, not by a non-voting representative, but by voting members in both the House and the Senate and that we can exercise our right to vote, including for the President, regardless of where we live, but especially when living in Puerto Rico. It is also time that we become first-class US citizens and we get treated the same as others US citizens by the US Government at all levels. The consequences of Puerto Rico not being a state impact our economy, our health and well-being greatly. We are considered by many entities and companies part of the international community and not part of the US, but do not have the power to change many US laws that support this treatment. We have made many plebiscites and referendums on the island's political status, which have been ignored by the US Congress. The majority of Puerto Ricans have moved to the mainland US, looking for opportunities that we know we will never have in Puerto Rico. It is time for Congress to act on this important issue affecting over 3 million US citizens.

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## **Rebecca Haden**

Thank you for your hard work preparing a compromise bill. Puerto Rico has voted three times for statehood and will probably do so again. However, the description of Sovereign Free Association seems to have some ambiguity in its claims about citizenship. One reading means that citizenship could continue in perpetuity, as long as parents are both U.S. citizens. The other suggests that babies born in a new nation of Puerto Rico could acquire citizenship -- perhaps by naturalization, as other COFA nations can. If this will require negotiation between the U.S. and the new nation of Puerto Rico, that should be made clear before the vote. People should not be misled into believing that continued U.S. citizenship is guaranteed if it really is not. Thank you for your attention.

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## **Jesus Nunez**

Thanks you for the hard work of finding a consensus bill to finally solve Puerto Rico's territorial status. I am a strongly believer that puertoricans living in the island will select statehood to finally have the political power in Washington and to contribute to this great nation. The three options presented in this bill and the information provided for

each one will give the puertoricans living in the island the necessary information to do an informed decision in Puerto Rico's status. Please don't include the territorial status as an option and this shall be decided by puertoricans living in the island.

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**Ivan Hernandez**

This is a great opportunity for congress to resolve the centenary problem of the colonial status of Puerto Rico. Most of the people of the island had reject the actual territorial status and the vast majority of the people of the island want to resolve this. This is the right bill at this point with a binding procedure absolutely necessary. The people of PR are tired of been discussing this issue for a very long time and this id the time for a permanent solution!!!.. Lets make US bigger!! Let's make this bill the Law!!!

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**Nathaniel Morell Gonzalez**

It is a undeniable fact, the current territorial status of the "U.S. Commonwealth of Puerto Rico" is colonial in nature. For more than 120 years the U.S. Citizens of Puerto Rico have been discriminated by Congress when it denies the same basic civil rights that are seen on any other part of the United States. The resident of Puerto Rico are denied the right to vote for President of the United States or to have voting representation in the Congress. American citizens on American soil without any says on the political bodies that decide their political futures. It is a stain in fabric of the American experiment, a stain against the idea of our republican form of government and an insult to the more than 100,000 veterans from Puerto Rico have serve honorably in the defense of the Unites States since World War I. The consensus is that the current colonial/territorial status loss the consent of the governed. The time has come for Congress to do its duty under the Territorial Clause of the constitution and pass the Puerto Rico Status Act now!

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**Jose Alvarez**

Thank you all for the hard work so far. Thanks to Jennifer and Nydia for getting together and reaching an agreement for the well-being of Puerto Rico so we can finally decide FOR GOOD the final political status our island can reach. After 124 years is just

too much to go on like this. We all agree the current status is colonial in nature and should not be included in the plebiscite. The problem can't be part of the permanent and final solution. I'm an licensed attorney and CPA living on the island and I can see the daily disadvantage our colonial status causes. We can't vote for the President, the one that can send us all into war. We don't get two senators and at least four representatives that can fight for us DIRECTLY, with a vote that counts, in Congress and that also can provide their help and insight on how our nation can be better, more just, and protect the rights our constitution allows. On behalf of my fellow Americans living on the island please move as fast as possible so we can ONCE AND FOR ALL bring this issue to an end.

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## David Colon

Honorable Raul M. Grijalva  
Presidente del Comité de Recursos Naturales  
Cámara de Representantes de Estados Unidos

Hon. Grijalva

Permitame presentarle “ ELA de Puerto Rico- Defensores Inc. “incorporado bajo los estatutos del Departamento de Estado de Puerto Rico como una organizacion sin fines de lucro. Nos identifica el pueblo puertorriqueño como los Defensores del Estado Libre Asociado.

Nuestra mision es asegurar que los ciudadanos conoscan, entiendan y se unan a la defense del Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico como la major alternativa de estatus politico para la isla de Puerto Rico.

Es un honor para nosotros tener una union permanente con los Estados Unidos donde garantice la ciudadanía Americana por nacimiento en Puerto Rico.

Respetuosamente llamamos a su atencion, conociendo su compromiso democratico, para que logre que la misma democracia impere en el PROYECTO 2070 de Honorable Nidia Velazquez y de Honorable Alezandra Ocasio honrando al Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico como alternativa, haciendolo uno democratico. Al momento en las pasadas consultas no han querido incluir el mismo como alternative, y el motivo es que, en el plebicitito del 2012, VOTARON 828,088 MIL PUERTORRIQUEÑOS a favor de que el Estado Libre Asociado permanesca en union con los Estados Unidos de America, en forma permanente.

La ley de relaciones publicas 7 trata de implementar la Ley Publica 113-114 aprobada por el congreso bajo la administracion Obama que prevé la financiacion de un plebicitito

y llama al Procurador General a hacer una constancia y que se incluya al Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico.

El Proyecto 2070 no incluye el Estado Libre Asociado actual de la mancomunidad como una opción. Las únicas disponibles para los votantes son: Estado, Independencia y Libre Asociación. Según lo definido por el derecho internacional- Una asociación entre dos naciones soberanas.

El Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico, el estado en que vivimos actualmente desde 1952, fue concebido y diseñado por mentes abiertas, creativas y notables tanto en el congreso como en Puerto Rico, y responde así a la política pública de los Estados Unidos contenida en las Leyes Públicas 600 de 1950 y 447 de 1952.

La constancia de que la papeleta contenida en la Ley de Relaciones Públicas 7 es consistente con la constitución y las leyes y políticas de los Estados Unidos, sería contraria a los derechos de cientos de miles de puertorriqueños que desean mantener y perfeccionar al actual Estado Libre Asociado establecido bajo leyes de El Congreso Ley 600 de 1950 y el 447 de 1952. La política de Autodeterminación verdadera e inclusiva del futuro político de Puerto Rico como defendida por todos los presidentes desde el Presidente Honorable Truman hasta el presidente Honorable Joe Biden.

El derecho a determinar el futuro estatus político de Puerto Rico pertenece a todos los puertorriqueños. Al excluir el Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico de la boleta electoral, los partidarios del mismo estado privado de sus derechos por sus creencias políticas; Sin derecho al voto por la creencia en un estado creado por el congreso, respaldado por las Naciones Unidas y por el pueblo de Puerto Rico.

Le instamos con mucho respeto a que determine incluir la opción del Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico.

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**Carmelo Rios**

May 26, 2022

Raúl Manuel Grijalva

Chairman House Committee on Natural Resources

1511 Longworth HOB

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman,

The delegation of the New Progressive Party in the Senate of Puerto Rico is formally requesting to schedule a meeting with you and your staff during the public hearings you will be holding for the historic Puerto Rico Status Act in June. We are extremely excited to discuss a bill that finally puts an end to our colonial status and gives us the power to decide our own destiny.

It is important to our delegation that we receive an opportunity to sit down and discuss the many positives we feel are present in the bill, while also taking time to explain some of our recommendations to amend and better it. As you have previously stated, it is important that all sectors of the Puerto Rican People residing on the Island be given the chance to air out their opinions and misgivings with this legislative project to produce something that will not only have the support of the majority of the People, but also be something that can be approved in Congress.

The Puerto Rico Status Act is a shining example of what can be accomplished When we put aside our differences and come together in order to produce a bill that we can all agree on. This bill has all the most important elements that each side was looking to include and makes everyone involved feel like their voices were heard and respected. Thank you for your time and consideration and we look forward to meeting with you soon. If you would like to reach us, you can contact the NPP Minority Whip's office number (787) 945-5333 or through his email [crios@senado.pr.gov](mailto:crios@senado.pr.gov).

With regards,

Thomas Rivera Schatz NPP Minority Leader

Carmelo Rios Santiago NPP Minority Whip

Henry Neumann Zayas

Migdalia Padilla Alvelo

William Villafañe Ramos

Gregorio Matías Rosario

Keren Riquelme Cabrera

Nitza Morán Trinidad

Wanda Soto Tolentino

Marissa Jiménez Santoni

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## **Jaime Aldarondo**

Voters in Puerto Rico should be allowed to have another option in the plebiscite. This option should be the reunification with Spain. Puerto Ricans voters should be allowed more time to get educated on the proposed draft. The proposed draft prevents a big segment of the population from expressing their views on the ballot. As a taxpayer I request that the proposed draft be amended to include the alternative Reunification with Spain as an additional option on the ballot.

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## David Vazquez

This a great beginning to end the colonial status of PR by the people of PR.

### Definitions

I would like to a get a clarification on the definition of “bona fide resident” because of the number of Boricuas in the diaspora who might think they can vote in this special elections (Nov 5, 2023; March 3, 2024)

What does majority of the valid votes cast? (for one of the three options)

What percentage for voter participation is expected and what number of votes is considered a majority? (over what % will prevent a runoff)

How long is the expected 1st agreement duration exactly? Articles of Free Association Page 13 not clear sec 10. Under which status or how it relates to the voter education Citizenship

It is not clear what you mean when you state that during the Articles of Free Association 1st agreement duration only if both parents are US citizens shall be eligible to acquire....US citizenship (page 7). Currently, all Boricuas are US citizenship, so are you talking people born after this date? It is not clear who remains as US or can get in the future

If it becomes a State, we continue with US citizenship, no need to write (c) on page 9. (it seems like a political statement)

If it becomes a Free Associated to the US, page 35 not clear the citizenship definition.

In black and white under free association, how do we keep US citizenship? What is proposed in the bill is not clear? It can be misinterpreted.

### Transition

Page 37 (2) no clear how you can educate the people if the negotiations are not prescribed that relate to foreign affairs, trade, finance, taxation, security and defense, dispute resolution, immigration, economic benefits (grants), etc... It seems this status can fall by default on our current Commonwealth status, which then needs to be improved and not under the power of Congress. What would happen with the Jones Act? As example...that should be part of this list that need to be negotiated.

As a free association, can we keep US citizenship if we keep enlisting in US Armed forces as well as social security.

Free Association information in this proposal is weak, it seems it will be hard to inform the people if we do not know the types of agreements we can negotiate with Congress.

It just seems that Free Association will fall into the current status of Commonwealth and the purpose of this bill is eradicating the colonial relationship between the US and PR.

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Antonio J. Fas Alzamora



Dear Chairman Grijalva,

First, I want to thank you for your ongoing consideration and support to the people of Puerto Rico. I appreciate that while so ably representing the state of Arizona, you continue advocating and enacting policies that improve the lives of our constituents in Puerto Rico.

I am writing to you as former Senate President of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the longest-serving legislator in the history of Puerto Rico (1977-2017), former Secretary General of the Popular Democratic Party (PDP) and actual member of the PDP Governing Board, since 1978.

Despite having been a strong supporter of Commonwealth for most of my political career, I have dedicated the past 12 years of my life working on a non-territorial and non-colonial free association proposal, entitled "Compact of Association between the governments of the Free-Associated State of Puerto Rico and the United States of America". 12 years ago, I presented the first draft of this proposal with an inclusive process of public hearings around the island to discuss it and consider amendments that were included in the 2020 version of the compact proposal. I'm including you a link with all the information of my compact proposal in [www.pactodeasociacion.com](http://www.pactodeasociacion.com).

I would like to share with you and your staff a summary of my proposal, so I'm formally requesting the opportunity to meet with you and your staff in the Committee's visit to Puerto Rico.

I am also available for any virtual or in-person meeting that may be necessary to advance initiatives in favor of Puerto Ricans. I look forward to meeting you.

Best regards,

Antonio J. Fas Alzamora, Esq.  
tonyfasalzamora@gmail.com

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**Guillermo Gonzalez**

May 29, 2022

To: US Congress Representatives,

Raúl M Grijalva, Nydia Velázquez, Alexandria Ocasio- Cortez, Jenniffer González

Dear Representatives:

I am writing these words to congratulate all of you for making history with the process of decolonization and self political determination for us, the People of Puerto Rico. This is the first time in our five hundred twenty-eight years, and running, as a colonial possession that our real government- Chief of State of PR is Joe Biden- asks the people living in their territory how do we feel about it, and which are our wishes and goals for our common relationship. It's like living with your wife for years and never talking to her. Four hundred and five years under Spain's control and one hundred twenty-four years under USA control. Nobody during the signing of the Treaty of Paris, to end the Spanish American War, asked us, the Puerto Ricans, our opinion of the property transfer of ownership of the land in which we were born and live. Living in a colony is like living as a test tube baby- you do not own your habitat.

My name is Guillermo Gonzalez Roman, aka, Guillermo Gonzalez MD for my writings. I was born in Santurce, PR in 1949. I am a retired physician, specialized in Psychiatry and Neurology. Now living back in PR after 30 years of medical practice in the states of New York and Massachusetts. I have read and fully agree with the draft of The Puerto Rico Status Act.

It is my opinion that the USA has been dodging its responsibility, as assigned by the Treaty of Paris, which was signed in 1899, to determine the political future of the relationship of the US with PR. None of you before has talked to us expressing your divided and conflicting opinions regarding the future of our relationship. You have masqueraded your ambivalence to us, as described in the Insular Cases and the recently decided case of Vaello Madero by the US Supreme Court, by using the excuse that there is no consensus between us and not you. How could there be consensus among us when there are multiple mutually excluding possibilities, which are not defined, and we have no power to decide? We are requested consensus on issues that only you have the power to enforce, and you have never defined which are the possibilities. Are you playing with us "blindly tagging the donkey"?

It is always easier to blame the weakest and defenceless. Article IV, Section III, Clause II of the US Constitution gives you unilateral rights to legislate the rules for our lives and society- in a unilateral unquestionable and irrevocable way. To the point, based on monetary claims that we are poor and do not pay enough taxes to receive equal treatment under the Constitution, you allow the SSI benefits assigned from you to the poor, except not for the poor people of PR. In 1984, the US Congress took away the federal bankruptcy protection to us during insolvency. You also put for cheap sale the triple tax exemption Commonwealth bonds in their portfolios, which by 2015 over 70% of the Mutual Funds in the US had Commonwealth bonds with excellent and above average interest rates, and they were Joker bonds that anybody could buy them, tax exempt, especially for states with high taxes. All of this, in conjunction with our financially incompetent and irresponsible local government that is still two years behind

in submitting audited consolidated financial statements, lead us to insolvency and incapacity to defend ourselves from Wall Street. It may sound paranoid, but the path was set for Wall Street to take over all the actives of our local fictitious government. We were defenceless people with no political power in our real government- the federal government- left to face the mammoth of Wall Street alone.

The Russians are invading Ukraine and not respecting their right for self political determination. US Congress has been doing this to us for all these years; ignoring our will and democratic right for self determination. For some of you, it is an issue of not wanting PR to be a purple or swing state that will decide presidential elections. For us, it is a request for our sovereignty, residing today with you in the US Congress, ending the unilateral control from you on your colonial territory possession. Maybe, to the surprise of some of you, I believe that with our sovereignty we will successfully survive in both possible scenarios- statehood or independence.

For the past 16 years I have been writing about the colonization process of PR and the effects on the Puerto Rican personality. I have published six books on this topic and I am in the process of writing my seventh book in support of The Puerto Rico Status Act- "Puerto Rico and Ukraine from a Bird the Two Wings- Self Determination Missing".

It is my opinion, based on my experience, that you are not the only ones to blame for the persistence of the colonial situation of PR for all these years - we have also contributed. Experience, biology, and personality interact, being cause and effect of each other. The Colonized Personality has evolved from years of colonialism, creating dependence in the metropolises, and inferiority feeling and insecurities about a future of our own, with the responsibility of a government that could support its own structures and facilitate the self and financial support for all of us Puerto Ricans. Habits are difficult to change and at times we are our own worst enemy.

Thank you for providing me, as a private citizen living in PR, an opportunity to express my opinion about our political future and our future relationship with the USA. The Puerto Rican self determination process is a common responsibility, and we will fight for it as united people in a democratic and peaceful way, different from the Ukrainian people that have been forced to fight fearfully for their self political determination process.

Sincerely,

Guillermo González Román

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**Manuel Ángel Rugama Amparo**

In Puerto Rico and Spain there are civic-citizen movements that promote the

reunification of Puerto Rico and Spain. We demand that the option of reunification be included among the options in a future plebiscite.

Puerto Rico was a Spanish province in 1898, whose inhabitants had accepted democratically and by a large majority, the political autonomy that the approval of the Autonomous Charter of 1897 meant.

The US militarily invaded and seized by force of arms the Spanish province of Puerto Rico to subject it to a colonial regime.

The Puerto Rican people have the right to become an integral part of their founding nation, Spain.

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### **Nancy Ferrer**

Añadir al borrador el Movimiento de Reunificación de Puerto Rico con España como cuarta opción. Esta opción es viable y permite a muchas personas poder escoger lo que mejor convenga a la Isla de Puerto Rico.

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### **Elaine Montgomery**

Looking forward to the Puerto Rico Status Act resolves once and for all the political status.

To prevent further delays, the options need to be clearly explained.

I propose those that have voted in previous PR elections (are listed in the State Election Commission) that have moved from the island to another state are allowed to vote as absentee. What would not be fair would be to all Puerto Ricans living in the states to vote because the majority of them have never lived in the island. That is why the key point would be, those that have previously voted.

Thank you.

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### **Juan Mendez Rosa**

I support the PR Status Act consensus bill. It is an opportunity to enfranchised the American

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**Raul Velez**

I support Puerto Rico status act, is time respect the Right of United State citizen's of Puerto Rico, Failure to resolve the colony problem would be a violation of our fundamental rights as a United States citizen of PR

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**Iris Arroyo**

Yo apoyo la Estadidad para Puerto Rico I support Puerto Rico status act, is time respect the Right of United State citizen's of Puerto Rico, Failure to resolve the colony problem would be a violation of our fundamental rights as a United States citizen of PR

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**Walter Caraballo**

Please, no more dilation and unsuccessful demagoguery. No more doing what is done, just to give artificial life to the colonial system and second class citizenship. With this, there is no excuse to leave the project without seeing it in the Natural Resources Committee, and that it can be evaluated later in the plenary session of Congress. I support the status law for Puerto Rico.

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**Jose Arroyo**

How this PR status act will defend and protect the people, puertorricans and other states residents in the island, who has put their efforts in living in this island, buy properties and invest in businesses all because the previous status ELA and the outlook of a future union 'statehood' which now is in a threat of a possible independence or status that do not value our US citizenship? How they will be protected against people who has

nothing or not been interested in invest, buy properties and has dedicated all their life's to just be against a better future all the people of Puerto Rico? How it will value the fact that the statehood has won all the referendum and plebiscite done in past years against any other real status options? This status act should not fail to the people of PR who has sacrificed thier life's in this island because of the territorial status that now threatens to become 'something else' that they has not even imagine before. Thanks! God Bless America!!

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### **José Daniel Rodríguez-Allende**

The Puerto Rico Status Act draft is more than obvious that has been made to help statehood political status. Is like to "dejar entrar la estadidad por la cocina," (to allow statehood to enter through the kitchen). Besides, is more than clear that next November the U.S. Congress will be involved in elections and with this not-well- done draft, some Congress representatives are just looking for the Puerto Rican and Latino votes. No one asked the U.S. to invade an already autonomous country in 1898. This your mess and you have to fix it with honesty! At least the most honorable thing that your country United States should do is to be honest with our nation Puerto Rico and to tell our people what to expect from each political status, including an enhanced Commonwealth that wasn't included for some reason, before presenting any unreasonable and political motivated draft. Do not forget that the majority in the island doesn't want statehood. ¡NO QUEREMOS LA ESTADIDAD!/ WE DON'T WANT STATEHOOD!

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### **Rosa Velez**

It's long overdue! We deserve equality! Our soldiers have died for the Nation yet we don't even have the right to vote! We have been discriminated for 500 years. We are the oldest colony in history. The time has come for Puerto Rico to become a state! Statehood Now!

---

### **Maria Rivadulla**

Honorables Raúl Grijalva, presidente del Comité de Recursos Naturales de la Cámara de

Representantes de los Estados Unidos de América; Nydia Velázquez y Alexandria Ocasio Cortés, representantes a la Cámara de los Estados Unidos de América. Honorable Jennifer González, Comisionada Residente de Puerto Rico ante el Congreso de Estados Unidos.

Respetuosamente me dirijo a ustedes como ciudadana norteamericana residente en Puerto Rico para expresarles que he visto con profunda satisfacción cómo la representante Nydia Velázquez y nuestra Comisionada Residente Jennifer González se sentaron a trabajar en conjunto para crear un borrador de Consenso que recoja lo más genuino de los dos proyectos que fueron presentados el pasado año buscando opciones para resolver el problema colonial de Puerto Rico, entendiéndose por esto que no estamos de acuerdo en seguir viviendo bajo una condición territorial que minimiza nuestra ciudadanía, nos impide votar por el presidente de nuestra nación, y no permite que recibamos un trato igual que nuestros conciudadanos en los estados.

Tenemos la esperanza de que, gracias al interés y esfuerzo de ese Comité nuestro caso pueda ser visto en su justa medida, y que podamos tener finalmente una consulta democrática con voto directo de todo el pueblo para escoger entre las opciones descolonizadas reconocidas internacionalmente, siendo vinculante el resultado de esa consulta.

En el plano personal estoy de acuerdo con las tres opciones que se reflejan en el borrador:

Estadidad (el estatus que yo apoyo)

Independencia

Libre Asociación (modalidad de independencia con acuerdos bilaterales que pueden ser terminados por cualquiera de las partes en cualquier momento).

No estoy de acuerdo con insertar la condición colonial actual de Estado Libre Asociado (ELA), como parte de la consulta porque no es posible que incluyamos la misma cuando es precisamente la condición en la que estamos viviendo y con la que no estamos de acuerdo.

Me llena de alegría que estemos tan cerca de lograr el objetivo al que aspira la mayoría del pueblo de Puerto Rico, demostrado en varias oportunidades en diferentes consultas electorales: LA ESTADIDAD PARA PUERTO RICO como consecuencia natural de progreso económico, político y social siendo uno más del conjunto de estados que se rigen tanto por las leyes estatales como por las federales. Son muchas las generaciones nacidas atesorando la bandera, la ciudadanía y la forma de vida americanas. Más de cinco millones de personas de origen puertorriqueño viven en los estados de la Unión

disfrutando de todos los derechos que ampara nuestra Constitución Americana, al mismo tiempo que cumpliendo con los deberes que vienen dados por el ejercicio de nuestra ciudadanía.

Agradezco el interés de este Comité y de nuestra Comisionada Residente.

Todos han estado dando lo mejor de sí en este Borrador de Consenso.

Ayúdenos a impulsarlo.

Ayúdenos en la aprobación del documento tanto en Cámara como en Senado.

Y una vez aprobado, ayúdenos a poder educar a nuestro pueblo de manera seria y responsable en las opciones que se presentan a escoger, durante los once meses que medien antes de celebrarse la consulta para que la votación sea educada, madura, democrática, sin posibilidad de interpretaciones diversas. Que sobre el resultado no haya ninguna duda y sea vinculante. Es una decisión de futuro que tendrá repercusiones en todas las generaciones venideras.

Gracias por su compromiso.

Con el mayor respeto y consideración,

MARIA RIVADULLA

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### **Ralph DeStefano**

They do not want statehood from what I have read their country is bankrupt like ours but hey let's make sure we force their country into statehood . Another ploy for the DS to stay in power with more votes and throw more debt on the backs of the middleclass worker but don't worry you all will destroy that too just like your destroying our country with your communist policies.

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### **Salvador Ruiz**

JUNE 2 2022. .PR STATUS ACT DRAFT. ....MUST ELIMINATE THE STATEHOOD OPITION..ON ITS MENU ....STATEHOOD IS GENOCIDE..... THE ONLY 2 OPITION IN THE PR STATUS ACT THAT SUPPORT LIBERTY AND IS CONSISTENT WITH UNITED NATION PASTS RESOLUTIONS ARE COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE OR LIBRE ASOCIACION .....GENOCIDE ISNT SELD DETERMINATION.....THE PNP CLOWNS THAT HAVE GATHER IN WDC



..STARTING WITH. MRS. PIGGY ...AND 4 OTHER CLOWNS THAT INCLUDE THE  
IMPEACH X GOVERNOR OF PUERTO RICO. RICKY ROSSELLO...WANT. TO. TALK  
ABOUT EQUALITY ... YES. EQUALITY. PUERTO RICO. MUST BE. ABLE. ELECT ITS  
OWN 1ST PRESIDENT..... ESTABLISH ITS OWN NATIONAL ARMY ...PRODUCE ITS  
OWN CURRENCY .....ECT. YES. PUERTO. RICO. WANT. EQUALITY....THE.  
PUERTORICAN. PEOPLE. MUST. THE. ONLY POWER TO. RULE. OUR. COUNTRY.  
NO. OTHER... YES. WE. WANT. EQUALITY..USA CONGRESS ..SENATE AND USA  
PRESIDENT BIDEN...FREEDOM. IS. VERY. PRECIOS .... PUERTO RICO HAS BEEN  
BONDED INTO SLAVERY FOR 124 YEARS ... AND. WE. LIVED THE PAIN AND  
SORROW OF GREAT INJUSTICE JUST THE BLACK AMERICAN AND THE  
AMERICAN INDIANS .....PR STATUS ACT DRAFT. MUST IMMEDIATELY REMOVE  
THE GENOCIDE OPITION OF STATEHOOD ....NOW. AND ALLOW THE BIRTH OF  
NEW REPUBLIC OF PUERTO RICO ..TO RISE ...IN THE LIGHT OF DEMOCRACY  
AND WINDS OF FREEDOM .....THE. USA. HAS. THIS SUPREME ABSOLUTE  
OBLIGATION TO ASSURE THAT THE NEW REPUBLIC OF PUERTO RICO .. RISE.  
RISE. RISE .

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### **Evelyn Ashbrook**

The US Citizens of Puerto Rico have had 3 plebiscites in the last 10 years. All have favored Statehood. From those it is evident that (1) Puerto Ricans reject the current unequal territorial status and (2) supports statehood. It is time for congress to give the people of Puerto Rico a path to statehood.

This is a CIVIL RIGHTS issue, as the US citizens in Puerto Rico DON'T have equal rights to those that reside on the mainland. It is a VOTING SUPPRESSION issue, as the current territorial arrangement disenfranchises all 3.2 million US citizens living in the island. Puerto Rico provides one of the highest per-capita military participation rates in the Nation. Yet, they do not have the right to vote for their Commander in Chief. Over 100,000 veterans that reside in the Island have less rights than their fellow brothers/sisters in arms in the States.

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### **Hector Del Valle**

LAS PIEDRAS, P.R.  
4 JUNE 2022.

MR. RAÚL GRIJALVA  
US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES  
WASHINGTON, DC

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES:

I AM A CITIZEN WHO ADVOCATES FOR THE INTEGRATION OF PUERTO RICO AS THE 51ST STATE OF THE UNION. UNFORTUNATELY, A LOT OF US CITIZENS DO NOT LIKE THE IDEA OF PUERTO RICO ENTERING THE FEDERATION BECAUSE THEY THINK THAT THE ISLAND" WILL BECOME A PARADISE FOR WELFARE OR THE NEXT NORTHERN IRELAND".

I WILL ANALYZE A MYTH THAT PEOPLE BELIEVE ABOUT PUERTO RICO'S INTEGRATION AS A STATE, AS WELL AS THE SOLUTION:

A "WELFARE PARADISE": THE PROBLEM IN PUERTO RICO IS THAT 60% OF THE POPULATION IS BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL, CAUSED IN PART BECAUSE THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, IN PUERTO RICO HAS BEEN MORE THAN 10 PERCENT. IF PUERTO RICO BECOMES A STATE, THIS PROBLEM CAN BE SOLVED APPLYING THE ENTERPRISE ZONES CONCEPT BASED ON JACK KEMP'S MODEL. THIS WILL ATTRACT MORE INDUSTRIES INTO THE ISLAND'S ECONOMY AND SECURE THE UNITED STATES' SUPPLY CHAIN ( A MATTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY ), AS WE NEED A MEASURE THAT WILL GIVE INDUSTRIES IN PUERTO RICO A WAGE CREDIT, FOR EXAMPLE, AS AN INCENTIVE TO STAY IN THE ISLAND AND CREATE MORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

I AM NOT FOR A WELFARE PARADISE CONCEPT AS SOME PEOPLE SAY AND THINK ABOUT THIS, BUT WHEN A STATE ENTERS THE UNION, IT RECIEVES WHAT IT NEEDS, AND GIVES TO THE USA TREASURY WHAT IT CAN GIVE- THE ECONOMIC PARITY CONCEPT. IT IS OBVIOUS, HOWEVER, THAT PUERTO RICO WILL GET MORE FEDERAL FUNDS THAN NOWADAYS, AS PART OF A TAXATION REDEFINITION PROCESS, BUT IT WILL GO TO PEOPLE THAT NOWADAYS REALLY NEED IT: THE ELDERLY AND HANDICAPED (BY MEANS OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL SOCIAL SECURITY INCOME), THE VETERANS, AND MORE MEDICAID FUNDS TO THE POOR WHO NEEDS IT. THE LEGISLATION THAT WAS APPROVED IN THE PAST ON WELFARE REFORM HAS HAD THE OBJECTIVE OF STOPPING WELFARE DEPENDENCY AS A DESTRUCTIVE LIFESTYLE AND IT IS REQUIRING ABLE PEOPLE TO LOOK FOR A DECENT WORK,

WHILE GIVING APPROPRIATE DAYCARE FOR SINGLE MOTHERS.

PUERTO RICANS ARE AMERICAN CITIZENS SINCE 1917, BUT SECOND CLASS CITIZENS. WE DO NOT VOTE FOR THE SELECTION OF THE SELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT, AND WE DO NOT HAVE VOTING CONGRESSMEN. WE ONLY HAVE OUR RESIDENT COMMISSIONER, JENNIFER GONZALEZ- COLÓN WHO DOES NOT HAVE A VOTE IN CONGRESS.

MR. CONGRESSMAN, I THINK TIME HAS COME FOR PUERTO RICANS TO CHOOSE THEIR FINAL DESTINATION, NOT TO STAY IN THE POLITICAL LIMBO ANYLONGER. I THINK THIS BILL HAS TO DEFINITELY SOLVE THE STATUS PROBLEM ONCE AND FOR ALL. I SUPPORT HIS INITIATIVE TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM. HOUSE SPEAKER NANCY PELOSI SHOULD SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE TOO. I HOPE THAT AFTER READING THIS STATEMENT YOU WILL ALSO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT IT, AS WELL AS THE CHOICE OF STATEHOOD FOR THE ISLAND. MAY GOD BLESS YOU.

I ALSO HOPE YOU REPLY TO THIS STATEMENT WITH YOUR COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS. I ALSO REQUEST THAT THIS STATEMENT BE ADMITTED FOR THE RECORD.

SINCERELY,  
HECTOR L. DEL VALLE

Addendum:

The Federal Enterprise Zones and the economic future of Puerto Rico in a domestic environment:

By: Hector L. Del Valle Beauchamp

Puerto Rico, economically speaking, has hit bottom. That is why this writing analyzes an opportunity that could, if applied to our island, provide us with great relief, who knows if more, in the precarious environment we have today: the Federal Enterprise Zones.

Since 1993, the Federal Government of the United States has established this type of program in different jurisdictions where the level of poverty is very high. At that time, President William J. Clinton promoted this concept in areas such as the Appalachia, the Mississippi River Delta, indigenous reservations, and pockets of poverty in cities such as

Miami and Los Angeles.

The concept originates in the United Kingdom under Margaret Thatcher, adopted in the 1980s by Jack Kemp, then a congressman, and finally implemented by the administration of William J. Clinton. The versions since then have been several, depending on the ideology, Democrat (Zones of Economic Growth under Barack Obama), and Republican (proposal of Senator Rand Paul (S. 1551 in 2017)).

Benefits that are proposed are the following, among others:

- (1) Incentives for hired employees residing within the designated Zone.
- (2) Flexibility and preferences to be able to coordinate and participate expeditiously in Federal assistance programs and to access Federal government resources (streamlining).
- (3) Deduction of 100% in expenses in investment works in qualifying capital works (expensing).
- (4) Allow higher deductions for charitable contributions.
- (5) Allow foreign investors (who have the resources) to enter the United States to invest.
- (6) Funds to allow a great improvement in the quality of education in the Area.

We have to rejuvenate the depressed communities in Puerto Rico. In these designation analysis, more than 90% of the island would qualify. The message to Washington is clear: help us to help ourselves to escape the imminent abyss that beset us, and this already has a great sense of urgency. This initiative, working hand to hand with the already existing "Federal Opportunity Zones Program" can have great results to even become extremely synergistic!

I hope that every square inch of Roosevelt Roads Can be developed with this legislation. Furthermore, combined with the designation of the former petrochemical complex in the Penuelas-Guayanilla area...With EPA Superfund monies to decontaminate such premises...

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### **Nehemias Rodriguez**

Hello Congress,

The blood of Puerto Rican soldiers are claiming for justice. 123 years of colony are enough. Past november 3, 2020 655,505 puertoricans, 52.52% of the electoral votes, said no to colony and yes to Statehood. Congress must hear the people of Puerto Rico. Congress must act now. No more colony. say yes to PR Status Act. No more excuses.

Nehemias Rodriguez  
Utuaado, PR

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### **Bethzaida Falcón**

Saludos, Sr. Raúl Grijalva nosotros los residentes de Puerto Rico tenemos el derecho que se nos escuchen. Y siempre hemos vivido bajo el Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico. Qué es la fórmula bajo el Partido Popular Democrático PPD. Entiendo que se debe de incluir la fórmula del ELA. No La Libre Asociación y bajo el ELA hemos disfrutado. Todo los beneficios que tenemos que bueno ha sido el ELA y los mucho que el partido Nuevo Progresista PNP. Y el partido Independentista Puertorriqueño PIP han disfrutado. De los beneficios bajo el estatus actual nadie que no viva aquí. Debe de imponernos una fórmula que este país, que no conocemos, no hemos vivido. Y no queremos cómo residentes Puerto Rico. Con respeto le exijo que se incluya al el ELA muchas gracias por su atención.

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### **Roberto Rivera**

Honorable Members of Congress:

It is with great respect and humility that I submit this proposal for a completely different paradigm to achieve statehood for Puerto Rico: to become part of an existing US state, Florida, via annexation.

Historically the sole focus of our local statehood leadership, especially from the Partido Nuevo Progresista or PNP, has been to become the 51st state of the Union, with it's own governor, Congressional and Senate representatives, it's own state legislature, and most importantly all the immense political power and budget that comes with that. But the pro-statehood citizens of Puerto Rico do not care about local leadership achieving all that power - they just want to become a state. Most of US Congress and Senate members, as well as state governments, do not want a new state as many of them would lose Congressional and Senate representation to a new state.

Becoming a County (or a few counties) of a greater state like Florida removes these objections, and allows for an expedient and simpler process for Puerto Rico to become a County within a much larger and powerful state such as Florida. Just by this union the

PR economy would flourish - tourism, manufacturing, energy, services, remote workers, healthcare, etc would flock to PR given the special tax zoning (coded in federal laws that include states), lower salaries, high performing bilingual professional pool. We would gain all the benefits of Florida residents, particularly access to public institutions of higher education in mainland Florida, and the reverse is also true for mainland Floridians to have access to resident status and fees at our local public universities. The state of Florida will get all the benefits of an immediate addition of 3.5 million citizens: sales taxes in the billions each year, federal appropriations that are based on number of citizens, an area where businesses from other states and countries would flock to and add to Florida's tax revenue, a really big island to attract additional out of state tourism, and the voting loyalty to those who support and implement this option. And the list of benefits go on, including Florida state level supervision of Puerto Rico County level officials, Florida laws and regulations, court system, etc.

It is my humble opinion that this option be presented to the people of Puerto Rico, either as a separate 4th option to becoming the 51st state and alongside free associated state and independence, or as an sub-option within the statehood alternative alongside but separate from becoming the 51st state.

Please let the people decide, not the statehood politicians who primarily are seeking 51st state level power. I also firmly believe this annexation option is an alternative that has a much better chance of approval by Congress as well as the citizens of Florida, where million of their citizens are from Puerto Rican ascendance, and many others sympathetic to the immediate boost to Florida's economy such an annexation would represent.

Respectfully,

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**Amanda Rivera Lebron**

Self-determination is a human right, and a critical principle of international law, the supreme law of the land in the US. Statehood for Puerto Rico means equal rights for all US citizens, in line with the central tenets of the US Constitution. The law is on our side.

Be on the right side of history. Give the US citizen residents of PR the right to vote out of the colonial status quo and let democracy decide.

Whoever rejects a binding referendum, fears the true will of the people. Let democracy thrive and decide. Statehood now.

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**Jessu Perez**

There is a very flagrant flaw in this bill in the naming of the free association option. "Sovereignty in Free Association with the United States" is confusing, misleading, biased, and asynchronous with the other two options.

In international law, each of the non-territorial options constitute a FULL measure of sovereignty, including independence and statehood. To single out one of the options as "sovereignty" would be misleading and problematic. It would cause serious validity concerns in the plebiscite as it would infer, to the common eye, that the other two options do not constitute a full measure of sovereignty.

If you single out free association option as "Sovereignty in Free Association," then you'd be obligated to also adjust the other two options as well in order to mitigate bias and ensure an educated electorate base.

One might suggest:

Sovereignty with Integration with the United States (Statehood)  
Sovereignty with Free Association with the United States (Free Association)  
Sovereignty with National Independence (Independence)

To avoid these superfluous names, the free association option should simply be named "Independence with a Treaty of Free Association," or "Independence with Free Association" in order to satisfy common international law principles when it comes to choosing this status option.

Please fix the bill in the markup to resolve this key issue in the draft.

Thanks for your attention!  
- Jesus Perez, NY / PR

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**Raul L. Cotto-Serrano**

Honorable members of Congress,

My name is Raúl L. Cotto-Serrano. I am a professor of political science at the University of Puerto Rico/Río Piedras. I earned a PhD in political science/ philosophy from the University of Massachusetts/ Amherst.

My general position is that the draft concerning the relation between Puerto Rico and the United States fails to address the reality of the situation.

The situation is that in the present and for the foreseeable future, none of the three proposed alternatives is viable. I am identifying "viability" with a reasonable degree of economic self sustainability. In other words: the ability to create and sustain moderate economic growth in a reasonably autonomous way. I believe that this level of self sufficiency is a necessary condition for any of the formulas proposed and I also believe that none of them meet this essential requirement.

Never in its history has the United States admitted a territory as a state with the purpose of completely sustaining it economically thus creating a situation of total dependency. This would have been unreasonable and counterproductive.

Regarding the statehood alternative, the level of economic dependency existing now and for almost a century in relation to the United States is extremely high. This extreme dependency is the result of policies established by the United States and by the Puertorrican government. The pro-statehood movement has been most emphatic in deepening this dependence as an attempt to diminish the cultural-nationalistic identity already existing in the Island for centuries and prevent it from generating a powerful political nationalism. This policy has been counterproductive because extreme dependency is an obstacle to statehood.

Independence is also a non-viable proposition under the present circumstances. Making independence viable would require a serious program of import-substitution and the elimination of legal arrangements presently in place. This, in turn, would require a vigorous economic program financed by the United States during at least 40 or 50 years. A program such as this would require the full commitment of two generations of Puertorricans devoted to the development of their country as a self-sustaining entity. It would receive, at least initially, fierce opposition from the local ruling class which profits from being intermediaries between United States capital and local consumption. The present levels of corruption, which imply putting self-interest above the common good, is very pervasive not only in the corporate and public sectors but also in the civil society. This is a source of pessimism concerning the project of independence which is the one I favor.



As for the "Free Association", it is an attempt to perpetuate the existing situation of extreme dependency with some degree of international legitimacy. Apart from other internal inconsistencies, it is also a non-sustaining proposition with an illusory sovereignty: a neo-colony.

It is my understanding that you are trying to respond to the wrong question by thinking that the main issue here is to know what are the preferences or wishes of the voting population of Puerto Rico.

The question you need to ask yourselves is rather: what is the economic project the United States is willing to support and finance in order to facilitate Puerto Rico becoming a self-sustaining entity both politically and economically. If you fail to address the problem from this perspective the territory will remain a source of continuous discontent and confrontation both in the Island, overseas, and in the Continental United States.

Most cordially yours,  
Raúl L. Cotto-Serrano, PhD  
raul.cottoserrano@gmail.com

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## Jose Rivera

There are essentially only 3 political status options for Puerto Rico. The current "Estado Libre Asociado ( a non incorporated territory called a colony by its opposers), a fully incorporated State of the union and and a totally independent state. The current debate on Puerto Rico Status in this house committee is an achievement of those that oppose the current political status. History will show that under its current status, Puerto Rico underwent a massive economic recovery and was favored by the island residents in three major plebiscite over the other two options.. The ELA opposition or "Pro Statehooders" and pro independence, soon realized that that their losses in plebiscites were attributable to certain benefits such as the 936 excise tax clause which favored manufacturing operations in Puerto Rico, was an essential component of PR's economic success and was only available with an ELA status.. The third political party are the pro independence of Puerto Rico which is historically favored by less than 4% except in the last elections in which the achieved approximately 6%. In 1996, pro statehooder governor Pedro Rosello sent a letter to US Congress, expressing that Puerto Rico does not support the "936 excise tax clause any longer" . US Congress faded out that program in 5 years and in 1990 Puerto Rico economy started turning for the worst. A substantial amount of manufacturing operations left the island along with over a 100,000

employees. this caused a chain reaction of negative indicators in construction, bank financing, government bonds value, etc. The course irreversibly led to PR's bankruptcy.. All the ELA opposers were quick to blame the ELA status as the cause of the bankruptcy. They even adopted the term "Colony" as the cause of all evil to describe ELA to gain more support to counter it.

The truth is that the islanders have not had a chance to fairly express their wish for a political status because all subsequent plebiscites have been designed and loaded against ELA by its political oponents. ELA supporters believe that under the current status, a return to reasonable manufacturing levels is not only posible but vital to a sustained economic recovery. No other political option can do that.

Congress should, above all protect democracy and to achieve that , should not delete any option in any future plebiscite. Congress should also call for a second vote, in which the first two winners in the first vote, are then voted on. Above all Congress must be the only source of what each option entails and not leave that up to local politicians to interpret.

Keep in mind that a "Free Associated State" is the same as an independence status. Also keep in mind that as a Pro statehooder, Jennifer Gonzalez, wishes to compete with any definition of an independence status for an easy victory and in so doing pursues eliminating ELA as an option. She is knowledgeable of local politics and exploits the use of terms like "non-territorial or "colony" to convince congress to eliminate the only option that leads to the loss of the pro statehooders party. It is also predictable that in the eventuality that this ill fated bill is ever approved, The ELA party in Puerto Rico will not participate in that event.

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## **Bernard Gonzalez**

Honorable members of Congress,

I thank you for dedicating your valuable time to help resolve the colonial status of Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico represents an unsolved problem for the United States. It is important to resolve Puerto Rico status to one that is aligned with international right: Statehood, Independence or Free Association with the United States. We shall not lose the momentum to address among all Honorable members of Congress the current colonial status of Puerto Rico which harms all American citizens living in Puerto Rico.

Thank you.

Bernie Gonzalez

**Gilberto Flores**

I used to believe in Statehood until I learned in 2012 that Puerto Rico's past as a Province of Spain, its Senators (1871-1898) and Congressmen (Diputados 1809-1898) in the Spanish Parliament had been erased by the US sanctioned colonial education system, of course this only for the benefit of US colonial rule and disempowerment of Puerto Ricans against it. Alas the colony administrators obeyed, today knowing these facts and doing everything in their power through well-known corrupt use of public funds they have colluded to stop the people of Puerto Rico from knowing these undeniable truths and keeping them from learning about the reunification movement (Integration UN Charter 1541, 1960) thinking we may disappear, they offer nothing but empty 124-year-old lies/ words and are destined to wither accordingly through weariness. Educating about our political future means these truths need to come to light, be taught and learned, people from diverse backgrounds support reunification, ex statehood supporters like me, ex commonwealth supporters and ex independence supporters I've met and together we can reach a consensus NO other status formula can offer, as annexation is unrealistic and not only next to impossible but a threat to Puerto Rican Hispanic culture, language and heritage in an ever more radical and racially problematic US, with no real economic forecast or model than more US federal government expenditures and dependence; while Free Association and Independence (both Neocolonialism) will not only promote but are counting on a mass exodus of Puerto Ricans (a burden shifted to the US) and include political/economic uncertainty. In the opposite Reunification not only provides for the protection and renewal of Puerto Rico's Hispanic heritage, but also provides the means, stability and tools to promote the return of Puerto Ricans to the Island, and not be scattered around a foreign country of a foreign culture and language with a long history of systemic discrimination against Puerto Ricans, 124 years of political limbo with no democratic representation are witness to that. Reunification is the ONLY consensus gathering option, return what was stolen and restore the Autonomous Province of Puerto Rico, Spain's First Historic Autonomous Community. Autonomy, REAL Autonomy, like the privilege the Province of Puerto Rico fought for through most of the 19th century and gloriously achieved from its country Spain, is a UN charter recognized form of decolonization in the 21st century. Any other formula of "decolonization" that have appeared since the unilaterally imposed US invasion of 1898 are yet more forms of impositions on the will of the people of Puerto Rico, denied of our real past and history in order to disarm us against undemocratic US colonialism throughout more than a century. Decades of seeking autonomy from the US

by a majority of Puerto Ricans are proof that Puerto Rico and its people were stuck in requesting, wanting, demanding from the US, and autonomy impossible under the US constitution, what was conquered and lost from Spain in 1898 due to the US's unwanted and unilateral invasion. I am ex statehooder am a Puerto Rican of Spaniard descent, therefore a Spaniard, NOT an American, and the reason why we are still a colony, forced to exile in a foreign country (US) because of colonial economical failure by design, as colonies (territories) cannot be allowed to prosper more than the poorest US federated state to justify statehood "superiority" despite Puerto Rico's obvious advantages, wanting vehemently to return through reunification. Regards, Gilberto Flores, Orlando, Florida

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## **José Lara**

Founded in 2017, Adelante Reunificacionistas is a non-partisan Puerto Rican/Spanish advocacy group with the goal of restoring the Autonomous Province of Puerto Rico lost through violence by the unwanted and unsolicited invasion of the Province of Puerto Rico, Spain by the US in 1898. Reunification is Integration: UN Resolution 1541, 1960. We Reunificacionistas are Puerto Ricans that come from all the other century old main ideologies on the island, a colony of the US since 1898, and together we fight to release Puerto Rico from the burden of colonialism by removing the main problem factor, the colonial rule the US imposes over the Province of Puerto Rico since 1898 by searching for a future of well being within our motherland Spain. We believe Puerto Rico is Spain and know it was a province military invaded and separated from its country by force. We focus on fomenting the political option of Integration by reunifying Puerto Rico, Spain's First Historical Autonomous Province and its de facto first Autonomous Community and restore it by making Puerto Rico the 18th Autonomous Community of Spain, a stable and political option full of opportunities and possibilities that allows for the return of the Puerto Rican diaspora, the safe keeping of Puerto Rico's inherent Hispanic culture, language, idiosyncrasy and heritage, political and economical stability, security; respect for the US's own right to protect its self cultural identity, all this within Spain and the European Union, longstanding US economical and political allies and partners. Restoring the Autonomous Province of Puerto Rico means the reacquisition of the 3 Senators and 16 Congressmen (Diputados) Puerto Rico lost due to the 1898 US invasion only to get a Resident Commissioner with no vote. Puerto Rico had Senators since 1871 in the Spanish Parliament, Diputados in the Spanish Congress since 1809, this history has been hidden from Puerto Ricans as Inconvenient Truths that endangered the US past interest of keeping colonial grasp over Puerto Rico, that is not the case anymore, as such, a free determination and democratic process that allegedly seeks to educate the people

of the island on their future cannot be cemented on the hiding of truths inconvenient to US colonialism, and the efforts of the colonial elite to stop the knowledge of these, as well of the existence of the reunification movement should be stopped, the world is watching and from Mexico to Patagonia and as well as Europe they know about our existence and hard efforts in frontal confrontation with a colonial corrupt elite that despises ideological competition. We will remain active, ready and vigilant for our moment under the sun as all these other so called "options" are increasingly worn out, this "Puerto Rico Status Act Discussion Draft" bound to be yet again an empty effort, yet we are vigilant, as annexation endangers the future of Puerto Ricans in an ever more radicalized and divided US, and thus, for or sakes, cannot be allowed to happen. Bound to the Jones Act, no economic model but that of ever increasingly dependency of more US federal government transfers and subsidies, while endangering Puerto Rican culture. We remain vigilant as Free Association and "Independence" from the US will be in practice forms of neocolonialism, add their instability, uncertainty prospects, and the accounted for possibility by their proponents of a major exodus of Puerto Ricans to the US, accounted for due to their projections for lacking economical prospects and outcomes. These so called "options", more likely impositions whose existence (except independence) are linked to the US invasion of the Province of Puerto Rico, do not all provide for the return of a major chunk of the Puerto Rican diaspora, the political/economical stability and security in the islands, and the protection and restoration of Puerto Rico's inherent Hispanic heritage. it is only Fair and an exercise of Justice to allow Puerto Ricans to Return to the Path Drawn and Chosen by our Ancestors/Forefathers (which are NOT the US's forefathers, as Puerto Rico has existed way well before the idea of the US was ever conceived) before the Undemocratic Burden of Colonialism was imposed in 1898 by the United States of America over the residents of the Autonomous Province of Puerto Rico, Spain's First De Facto and Founding Autonomous Community. A list of Historical Senators, Diputados (Congressmen) a Treaty between the US and Spain recognizing the US knowledge of Puerto Rico's status as a Province of Spain, REAL Autonomy and more, are available on our platform for all US lawmakers and people of interest to access. Regards. Adelante (Go Forward).

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**Wilfredo Valentin**

INGENIERÍA POLÍTICA PÚBLICA  
WILFREDO VALENTÍN SERRANO  
INGENIERO LIC.5925 PE  
SAN JUAN P.R.

Por Wilfredo Valen◆n Serrano, 2020

Registro de Propiedad Intelectual # P20-135 (Puerto Rico)

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## I-INTRODUCCION®

! Ea Rayos, que tremendo susto pase anoche! Hoy me desperté luego de un sueño de consternación, tan y tan real que desperté asustado. Llame de inmediato a mi hermano Rudy a Tampa USA porque es un amante de la doctrina de la gran nación y le conté mi sueño y me dijo "es que te acuestas pensando con pajaritos preñados", Luego llame a mi otro hermano, Roberto; que reside en Guaynabo y al contárselo me dijo: "Estas Loco, eso nunca pasará, esto se quedara como está y punto.". Finalmente, llame a un amigo Abogado en Boca de Ratón USA, que silba de alegría por volver a vivir sus entornos infantiles en Puerto Rico y al contráeselo grito de alegría y me solicitó que le contara como se solucionó lo ocurrido. Así lo hice, pero confieso que todavía me he quedado medio turbado y la otra mitad aturdido y así también quedó el abogado al que se lo conté.

Espero que al lector no le suceda lo mismo al compartir lo que me sucedido en el sueño. Aclaro que la solución final que recibí en el sueño creo que puede ser real pero existen circunstancias que no recuerdo claramente porque el espacio del contorno del sueño fue en futuro!, óyeme bien , creo que era entre los años 2050 y 2060 ¿?

El drama de suspenso de mi sueño comenzó 25 años antes del periodo de tiempo que se materializó el final o sea pasando 2025. Recuerdo que fue cuando se retiró la Junta de Control Fiscal que gobierna actualmente PR porque saldaron todas las deudas a los accionistas de los Estados Unidos de América (USA) dejando a Puerto Rico en quiebra total y se marcharon. Simultáneamente el Presidente de la Gran Nación en un mensaje de "tuitero" de medianoche desde su despacho en Washington indicó lo siguiente: -Yo Presidente de la Nación Norteamericana declaro a la Isla de Puerto Rico (preparate para oír esto) descolonizada y queda completamente libre para que los puertorriqueños hagan lo que realmente le salga en gana con ese territorio y no me pidan más chavos porque me tienen bien molesto con sus peleas internas políticas y corrupción constante y por eso ..... Adiós Amigos,.... hasta nunca. -

¿Qué harías tú si al despertarte un día te enteras de un mansaje parecido sin previo aviso? ¿Sin ningún plan de gobernanza previamente preparado y Puerto Rico quebrado económicamente? ¿Crees que estaríamos en un CAOS nacional pensando que todas las plataformas de partidos políticos comiencen halando por su lado si ninguna planificación y reclamando que esta isla es de ellos? Como dice el jibaro " Ay ..Bendito " Pues ahorra debes tener una idea de mi sueno aterrador que te pienso detallar y el cual todavía me tiene aturdido pero luego me dio el deseo de explicar el sentido del sueño y logre escribir 48 módulos (capítulos para otras personas) y te lo voy a exponer en forma de resumen compactado la cuales indica una solución científica de ingenio para vivir finalmente feliz y en armonía en esta Isla luego de la noticia de la descolonización

Aclaro

,que aunque es difícil confrontarnos con esta idea nunca antes concebida , la misma continuará de locos hasta que algún día se haga realidad. Verdaderamente pienso que mi despertar me alejo de mi congoja. Pero confieso que antes de despertar conviví en una sacudida de una gobernanza que arropó felizmente la politiquería y finalmente,

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luego de dos a tres décadas, pude ver como los partidos se reinventaron en sus organizaciones creando una nueva forma de gobernanza hibrida / científica. Créeme que fue algo bello y agradable vivir en ese periodo de ese sueño y fue por eso que desperté asustado al volver a la realidad actual.

Lee el contexto de mi sueño el cual está revelando en el Resumen Sumario, Modulo 46, para conocer que paso luego de la descolonización. Constantemente se habla mucho descolonizar a Puerto Rico pero no se dice que pasará y que haremos luego. No hay nada instruido, posiblemente será improvisado. Por esa razón, mi sueño me asustó porque vi la isla finalmente en hermandad y en convivencia entre los partidos políticos con un plan bien determinado y me pareció tan y tan real, pero al despertar, me acordé de que los sueños.....sueños son.

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® Por Wilfredo Valentin Serrano, 2020

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PREAMBULO ®

Procedo a explicar un tema que es una Utopía Política la cual en este momento histórico que estamos viviendo es parte de una dosis amortiguadora para nuestro diario vivir de gobernanza en Puerto Rico. No obstante, como todas las "Fantasías Políticas" su aplicación será útil en un futuro que posiblemente requiera tres décadas partiendo desde el 2018 para entenderlo y comenzar a apreciar e interpretar sus frutos sociales.

Posiblemente y sin duda alguna, los que estamos leyendo el contenido de este escrito nunca lo podremos vivir.

Es de desconocimiento que mucha de la tecnología actual fue preconcebida hace décadas pasadas y es ahora que disfrutamos sus aplicaciones y ventajas, pues así posiblemente será esta propuesta que ahora es utópica, pero no sabemos si dentro de 30 años sea una realidad.

En esta introducción se pretende establecer que todo el contenido que aquí se exprese es de carácter hipotético y de visión no preconcebida anteriormente de un concepto de gobernanza política.

Como lo que se va a expresar es un concepto controversial y de ideas no perceptibles es prudente comenzar en el espacio al tiempo actual para el desarrollo de su contenido.

Como en todo nuevo punto de vista se desarrollan nuevas ideas, nuevas visiones políticas, nuevos matices operacionales de hacer cosas diferentes y nuevas ideas y variaciones de gobernanzas políticas para Puerto Rico e indiscutiblemente, una resistencia a cambios y está no es la excepción. Es importante comenzar con identificar el concepto con un nombre que defina este proceso de aplicación científica.

El nombre que seleccionado no existente en la actualidad en los contornos de las Ciencias y menos en la Ciencias Políticas y de la Ingeniería. Es de tal manera que hasta el nombre elegido es algo extraño e inexistente. El nombre escogido es: Ingeniería Aplicada en Política Pública. ¿Verdad que suena raro? En este preámbulo no es recomendable explicar el concepto de esta ingeniería, pero si se explica posteriormente en uno de los módulos descriptivos del proceso..

Ahora, todos conocemos o hemos oído el significado y/o definiciones de la palabra Ingeniería y la de Política. Lo que desconocemos como se pueden integrar ambas en una fundición científica.. Algo tienen en común, porque ambas son ciencias contundentes a otorgar grados académicos de bachilleratos, maestrías y doctorados Es por lo antes descrito que existen aplicaciones comunes a justificar sus interacciones científicas con la Ingeniería.

Luego de ofrecer una breve explicación de la amplitud de los estudios conducentes en aspectos de las Ciencias Políticas, la cual más o menos en una forma o en otros todos hemos tenidas vivencias en sus vaivenes, nos dedicaremos a definir la palabra Ingeniería.

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Antes de abundar más en el concepto de la Ingeniería creo que es prudente y sensato establecer que mi primer diploma Universitario fue otorgado por la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Mayagüez, antes Colegio de Agricultura y Artes Mecánicas de Mayagüez (CAAM). Este pergamino indica, entre otras cosas: Bachiller en Ciencias de Ingeniería.

No obstante, podríamos prácticamente unir las Ciencias Políticas con las Ciencias de Ingeniería como dos ciencias fusionadas adquiriendo el nombre de ciencias en Ingeniería de Políticas. A este Nombre se le debe añadir un adjetivo usando la palabra Pública: Ingeniería de Ciencias Políticas Publicas o simplemente Ingeniería en Ciencia de Políticas Publica La gran diferencia que expresa esta utopía es que por primera vez se estudia este fenómeno científico usando la creación de una ciencia aplicada de ingeniería para política pública donde no es que la política pública adquiere los conceptos de la ingeniería ni que la ingeniería adquiere la ciencias políticas es que se unen para hacer una nueva ingeniería aplicada en política pública. Aunque no es fácil de entender, la nueva fusión de conceptos científicos, la ingeniería de Política Publica dejando al lado los conceptos de estudios legales y aplicado leyes humanitarias de convivencias . No absorbe conceptos de las leyes creadas por el ser humano sino de



conceptos científicos de ingeniería aplicada de leyes naturales y científicas en su aplicación en conceptos organizaciones y funciones de asuntos técnicos y científicos de la política.

Actualmente, cuando se estudian Ciencias Políticas toda esta creado, estudiada, realizada y lo que se ejecuta son aplicaciones de nuevas leyes y diferentes conceptos y formas de realizar política hasta crear un sistema que satisfaga a parte de la ciudadanía

pero no en su totalidad mediante sistemas democráticos de elecciones .Lo preponderante es que son conceptos creados por seres humanos y así como los crean así mismo los cambian o eliminan a necesidades particulares y/o a beneficios partidistas..

Por otro extremo la Ingeniería Política Pública pretende crear, desarrollar, inventar y aprobar diferentes formas científicas de gobernanzas y que sean los conceptos de estas leyes de ciencias políticas las que apliquen como herramientas para desarrollar nuevos conceptos de aplicaciones políticas y por consiguiente un sistema de gobernanza nuevo eliminando los paradigmas e ideales particulares.

Estoy bien convencido que todavía no he explicado nada del concepto de la nueva forma de gobernanza aplicando la Ingeniería Política Pública y ya comenzamos atraer controversias de criterios apartados de ¿que es eso de Ingeniería Política Pública? Ya había expresado al principio que NO EXISTE la ingeniería política. Como todo lo nuevo y más si no es convencional crea inquietudes, diferencias de opiniones y comentarios, unos a favor y otros a destruir en concepto porque no lo entienden o por razones personales y punto. Este comportamiento humano es conocido como “resistencia a los cambios “. Recordemos que todo cambio trae resistencia. Lo interesante de este concepto es como no existe, ni ha existido nunca, no se pueden hacer conjeturas de

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que no sirve por lo tanto, ni hay experiencias previas para ser comparados de lo bueno ni lo malo. Existe una realidad y es que lo existente no satisface al pueblo. Lo que si podemos estar en acuerdo es que la manera de gobernanza actual de todos los partidos políticos en Puerto Rico y los que aparezcan posteriormente no ofrecen nada nuevo en política sino asuntos reciclados. Unos más aquí y otros menos haya, esa es la ecuación costumbrista actual. Contrario a la Ingeniería Pública Pública porque existen fórmulas de ecuaciones científicas para lograr una gobernanza para un cambio uniforme de gobernanza la cual no altera los ordenamientos internos de los partidos políticos existentes o futuros. No interviene con los ideales de los diferentes partidos políticos sino

en la manera de gobernanza.

Los conceptos de Ingeniería y los de Política existen desde que el mundo es mundo y hemos vivido como estas dos ciencias desconocían como sus funciones y aplicaciones

podían funcionar para lograr una gobernanza pública con nuevas expectativas funcionales dejando atrás aplicaciones legales para satisfacer a un partido o peor para destruir reputaciones y corporaciones con ideales contrarios a las que no sean afiliadas al partido que está en el poder. En la Ingeniería Política Pública, esa práctica no tiene espacio porque al incluir en su fórmula de gobernanza pública esa función como constante, la fórmula no la puede procesar y la descarta como una función introducida es su "In Box" reconociéndola como función matemática de tipo basura "Garbage". Hemos sido testigos que proyectos de Ciencias de Ingeniería que actualmente han prevalecido por muchas décadas y los disfrutamos históricamente y algunos antes de Cristo. No así en conceptos de gobernanzas Políticas que han desaparecidos porque han sido funestas por sus gobernantes que ni siquiera deseamos mencionarlos. Lo que si conocemos es que actualmente son conceptos reciclados,

Bueno mi querido lector, dejemos a un lado lo que te preocupa del título de Ingeniería Política Pública porque deseo recordar que es un nombre ficticio y la ingeniería política una forma utópica de nueva gobernanza cuando se une a la ciencias políticas. No deseo con este escrito traer polémicas porque no se ha dicho nada que no sea expresar conceptos nuevos para gobernanzas utópicas.

Deseo aclarar que el que escribe este ensayo NO ES POLITICO, NO CONOCE NADA DE CIENCIAS POLITICAS, TAMPOCO ES ABOGADO NI NO PERTENECE A NINGUN

PARTIDO POLITICO ni concurre con sus ideales. Solamente es un Ingeniero de Ciencias Aplicadas que practica su profesión como Ingeniero Consultor en Ingeniería de Peritaje Forense

Lo ocurrido de este caso y nos debemos hacer la misma pregunta, ¿Cómo es que con el perdigoneo de política antes expresado yo pueda expresar ideas de gobernanzas políticas e idear una ciencias de Ingeniería en Ciencias de Política Pública aplicada sin integrar y usar conceptos de Leyes constitucionales? Yo también me he hecho esas mismas preguntas y a veces me pregunto también como considerando que soy un neófito

de la historia política de Puerto Rico y reconociendo que lo que se de la historia es

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solamente lo aprendido en las escuelas públicas de Puerto Rico y en la universidad en los cursos básicos me atrevo a desarrollar esta utopía de una nueva gobernanza para para Puerto Rico. Bueno, lo que sé es que esas condiciones me han favorecido grandemente porque me considero que no estoy "contaminado" de los asuntos políticos de Puerto Rico y por tal razón veo razonamientos de nuevas y diferentes gobernanzas pero como no existe aplico mi preparación académica que es la de ingeniar.

En resumen en el próximo capítulo comenzaré a describir el concepto que he

desarrollado para Puerto Rico haciendo la salvedad que como es un tema de fantasía

utópica espero que nadie opine que no funciona porque esto está escrito para de aquí a tres o cuatro décadas y posiblemente el lector no este desacuerdo pero deberá tener en cuenta que quizás no tenga la oportunidad de vivir en este Puerto Rico. por lo antes expresado el tema discutido lo usara solamente para conocimiento alterno de una nueva idea de gobernanza .Recordar que existirán otros puertorriqueños con formas diferentes de pensar como gobernar a Puerto Rico como lo que estoy pero los invito a que presentes sus ideas

Concepto Analítico - La Caja Negra

Nota Importante:

Lo que a continuación se expresa son conceptos puramente analíticos, matemáticos y científicos que se desarrollan para sostener la viabilidad para este proyecto. Lo escribí de esa manera para que los ciudadanos dedicados a la Política Bananera de PR le sean fácil de entender de donde sale este concepto de Ingeniería Política que NO EXISTE EN NINGUNA PARTE DEL MUNDO, hasta este momento. Básicamente si no conocen la Ingeniería Social, no le será fácil entenderlo. Les recomiendo que la lean. El uso de los: IN -Box, Black Box y Out Box son conceptos de ingeniería, no de leyes. (.véase Modulo #3)

Científicamente tuve la suerte y el entendimiento de poder probar que funcionaria sin las intervenciones aquellos ciudadanos que viven como sanguijuelas de la Política Publica de PR los cuales son los menos, pero si existen. Lamentablemente estos pocos trabajan con el único propósito de servirse propiamente o a su partido y no a un pueblo .Por sus acciones los conocemos. Sin ofender a nadie, pero en este tipo de gobernanza no hay lugar para incrédulos ni corruptos porque el pueblo gobernado tendrá su forma de evaluarles científicamente. Si, como exprese, el pueblo gobernado, no la gobernanza. Este ensayo está muy comprometido con los conceptos de las Ciencias Políticas y no con la politiquería costumbrista en PR. A mi mejor entendimiento las bases de todos los Partidos existentes en PR son conceptos muy comprometidos, Lo que no son muy formales y serios son como lo realizan cuando han llegado a la etapa de sus gobernanzas, exceptuando aquellos partidos que nunca han gobernados pero sus conceptos son presentados con respeto y buenos ideales pero como nunca han gobernados se quedan en propuestas galácticas.

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Lector créeme, que en donde existe una práctica de Ciencias, la ingeniería aplica sus conocimientos para mejorar sus postulados. Como ejemplo fácil de entender, en las Ciencias Médicas los Ingenieros han invadido la ciencia médica inventando nuevas técnicas de operaciones y diagnósticos. Ya en PR se está estudiando la Ingeniería Bio Medica con gran existo. ¿Y porque no en la política? Léete la Ingeniería Social y

entenderás como aplica en la política.

MÓDULO #46- Resumen Sumario

PARTE I – Condiciones favorables y requeridas para implantación de este Proyecto

Utópico

a- Que la Junta de Control Fiscal de PR se disuelva o sea retirada de sus funciones de fiscalizar a PR.

b- Que los Estados Unidos de América declare a la Isla de PR descolonizada y Libre.

Nota de Redacción

(Es de conocimiento general que se desearía que estas dos condiciones antes descritas se realicen en cualquier oportunidad en esta década. Lo que no se ha indicado es que luego de cumplirse ambas condiciones que pasará en Puerto Rico y como nos gobernaremos. En este Sumario se describe lo establecido por la Ingeniería Política Publica como una utopía política, que podría ser realidad con alteraciones cosméticas. Estos postulados deben ser presentados como alternativas. El ir a solicitar condiciones de estado sin tener nada para ofrecer y/o negociar para que todos salgan contentos, sería un resultado descomunal. . Debemos indicarle al Congreso que si nos tan lo solicitado haremos lo presentado porque bajo la Ingeniería Política Publica ganamos todos y la Nación Americana quedaría completamente satisfecha. Ver Parte III.)

Antes de haberse cumplido la condición establecida anteriormente, es necesario crear con antelación a estas dos condiciones una Constituyente de Ciudadanos

Puertorriqueños compuesta por representantes del pueblo y diferentes partidos políticos existentes y reconocidos por la Comisión de Elecciones para visitar el Congreso de los EU con el propósito de solicitar que el Gobierno Americano declare a Puerto Rico Descolonizada y Libre .

Luego de haberse aceptado en consenso por unanimidad los términos y condiciones que se irán a presentar mediante un proyecto de Ingeniería Política Publica completamente detallado y que en su aplicación contemple que todos los partidos representados y el pueblo de PR tengan el convencimiento y compromiso de que el mismo es para beneficio de nuestros ciudadanos. (Primer paso definido en la Ingeniería Política Publica como (“IN -BOX “) según Modulo # 3

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PARTE II – A continuación, un compendio del desarrollo de temas a ser analizados y como llegar a consenso preciso y analíticamente sin entrar en aspectos de ideales.

Expondré el escenario favorable para cada representante de partido que básicamente se componen de tres partidos principales y aquellos que cada año de elecciones comparecen pero el resultado de cantidad de votos obtenidos se mantienen relativamente bajos comparados con aquellos partidos que llevan años en contiendas políticas. Tenemos que comenzar con analizar las estadísticas reales de los resultados

en términos de porcentajes de los votos obtenidos en cada elección.

Se requiere trabajar con variantes y constantes de resultados de elecciones tales como, por mencionar algunos, números de participantes en votaciones por años a saber, votantes por partido y agrupar tendencias geográficas. Esto es con el propósito de procesarlos analíticamente en la fórmula matemática que nos proveerá valores matemáticos que representan numéricamente el promedio de participación de cada partido comparándolos con el área geográfica presentadas en unidades de metros cuadrados reales del límite territorial de la Isla de Puerto Rico y según se expresa en el Módulo #7.

Esa información nos provee la certeza inequívoca que si podemos dividir la Isla de Puerto

Rico en tres partes, pero no sería en partes iguales sino según el % geográfico y analítico que la fórmula provea. Estos resultados son representativos del historial de los que continuamente son seguidores fieles a cada partido “conocidos como los del corazón del rollo” identificados en la fórmula como valores constantes. Por otro lado, los que se afilian constantemente a diferentes partidos de elección a elección. Estos son “conocidos como los indecisos” e identificados en la fórmula como valores variables. (Segundo paso definido en la Ingeniería Política Pública como “BLACK-BOX”)

En resumen, tendríamos un proyecto en donde cada partido político tendría una porción repartida de la totalidad del territorio de la isla de PR en propiedad absoluta y bajo el mismo criterio, una repartición del dinero presupuestado. Estas reparticiones son proporcionales a su historial de seguidores y los resultados de constantes y variables obtenidos de las fórmulas usadas.

Para lograr una estabilidad de gobernanza confiable, antes de que se otorgue la solicitud de descolonización y para dar continuidad a este proyecto NACIONAL es imprescindible

crear un Organismo Constituyente de Ciudadanos de Puerto Rico (OCCPR) en paralelo a la Constituyente de Representantes Ciudadanos (CTC) para llevar a cabo las funciones relativas al proceso de distribución parcelarias. En esta ocasión la composición del OCCPR debe componerse de representantes que sean expertos reconocidos en asuntos como, y por mencionar algunos, Economía, Ingeniería, Psicólogo, Sociólogo, Ambientalista, Abogado, Seguridad Nacional, Arquitectos, Expertos en Salud, Educación, Artes, Deportes y Desarrolladores en temas de Urbanismo, entre otros. Se hace la salvedad de no incluir ni Abogados, Doctores ni Ingenieros que se hayan

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identificados políticamente afiliados en algún partido político directo o indirectamente, solo un abogado experto en asuntos legales de temas internacionales y constitucionales. En esta composición no se acepta más de un experto para cada materia o conocimiento para evitar el control del organismo por una clase profesional en la composición del

OCCPR. En paralelo a la OCCPR se funciona otra organización de puertorriqueños que servirán de consultores y es en esta Junta que se unirán los ciudadanos que no cualifiquen como miembro de la OCCPR. Esta Junta no tendrá ni voz ni voto ante la OCCPR, Todo será mediante procesos de asesoría y según el Módulo # 16.

La Isla se divide en tres (3) Naciones. Dos (2) en naciones Independientes; una para los seguidores del Partido Independentista y la otra para los creyentes del Partido Popular Democrático. La tercera prevalece como territorio anexo a los Estados Unidos de Norte América (USA) por sus siglas en inglés (Tercer y último paso conocido como el "OUT-BOX")

PARTE III- Distribución de "parcela"-Nación Estadista de PR (NEPR)

Indiscutiblemente el territorio americano del Norte sería localizado territorialmente entre

las dos Naciones Independientes para propósito de seguridad y controles internos .Además, el propósito primordial es que Estados Unidos se mantenga en Puerto Rico pero con la seguridad que en su territorio solo vivirán ciudadanos americanos leales a la Nación Americana únicamente. El límite litoral dentro del territorio entregado para esta

nación está delineado en el dibujo correspondiente de los límites de las tres naciones según Módulo #4

Este territorio será una extensión de propiedad absoluta de USA, donde el idioma gubernamental será el Inglés, la Constitución que reinara es la Americana, la enseñanza escolar será en inglés, la seguridad policiaca, marina ejército y aérea será la misma que en los estados americanos No obstante, los puertorriqueños que deseen continuar siendo ciudadanos americanos continuarán con su pasaporte y ciudadanía pero solamente tendrán que pasar por controles de la diplomacia americana para que juramenten fidelidad a la nación americana , constitución y bandera nacional americana. Aquellos que no deseen jurar fidelidad a la constitución americana y sus postulados detraen un plazo de 5 años para su decisión final, luego de terminado dicho plazo y si deseen prevalecer en la Nación Americana tendrán que entregar su pasaporte y registrarse con todas las disposiciones que le aplican a cualquier extranjero. No obstante el Gobierno Americano será reconocido mundialmente por haber terminado con la Colonia que tiene actualmente y no sabe cómo trabajar ese asunto. Saldría incólume de su actual señalamiento.

Es de conocimiento general que conseguir la Estadidad para PR nos llevaría bastantes años .Con este proyecto estaríamos adelantando la estadidad porque el gobierno americano reducirá en grande la ayuda que tendría que generar para sostener un territorio americano que comprenda toda la isla de Puerto Rico. En este caso se reduciría a los ciudadanos que verdaderamente desean ser gobernados por esta nación.

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Otra ventaja, y la que hay que presentar en este concepto , es que en el territorio donde se ubicaría la Nación Americana, los administradores del gobierno serian puertorriqueños que reconocen que existen leyes más rigurosas .De esta forma, el Gobierno Americano ganaría la confianza del Puertorriqueño y vería con buenos ojos evaluar con beneplácito una solicitud de los puertorriqueños para ser incorporados a la Nación Americana como Estado porque reconocerá que los que la piden son “americanos del rollo “

Para afincar el compromiso con la Nación de los Estados Unidos de América (USA) este proyecto debe solicitar que el territorio perteneciente a nación de USA inicialmente sea incorporado como una ciudad asociada al Estado de Florida por un periodo predeterminado hasta que se reconozca que ya está lista para su estadidad. De la Nación Americana interpretar que no le es favorable conservar ese territorio el mismo sería devuelto a la OCCPR para disponer del mismo distribuyéndolo entre las dos naciones vecinas.

Contrario a las otras dos naciones anejas a los EUA, en este territorio se usaría la economía .moneda y pasaporte americano pero no así en las otras naciones que tendrían que crear una constitución nueva y sistema de pasaporte, exceptuando la Nación Independiente que tiene su pasaporte formalizado y creado

#### PARTE IV- Distribución de “ parcela “-Nación Independentista de PR (NIPR)

La localización donde se ubicará la Nación Independiente de PR está establecida al litoral Este de la Isla de Puerto Rico. Esta Nación colinda por la región geográfica ESTE del territorio los USA y sus límites marítimos se extienden desde parte del NORTE comenzando con la colindancia con territorio Norteamericano hasta el NORESTE del Océano Atlántico. Continúa por todo la costa del ESTE, incluyendo las Islas de Vieques y Culebra, y parte del Mar Caribe por el SUR hasta la colindancia con territorio Norteamericano e incluyendo cualquier de las islas colindantes de dicho litoral. Esta, adicional a la aportación porcentual que les respondería en la distribución de parcela, incluirá las islas de Vieques y Culebra. Su proporción en la distribución de presupuesto auditado del Gobierno de PR tiene que ser equivalente al porcentaje de territorio cedido a su Nación. El limite litoral dentro del territorio entregado para esta nación esta delineado en el dibujo correspondiente de los límites de las tres naciones y según Módulo # 4

Esta Nación Independiente tiene que presentar un plan económico, política y de gobernanza ante la OCCPR. con el propósito de ayudarlos a obtener resultados favorables ya que no existe un historial de funciones previas de gobernanzas .La OCCPR es creada con esta finalidad de asesorar a las dos restantes Naciones que se componen de puertorriqueños para su éxito y lograr sus metas. Relacionado con la Nación de los Estado Unidos de América (USA) la aportación que brindaría la OCCPR para su desarrollo nacional está limitada por su constitución. No obstante, estaría velando y cooperando por los mejores intereses de la Isla de PR.

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La OCCPR tiene carácter de permanencia en la Isla de PR con los cambios requeridos en su composición. Su función es equivalente las de las Naciones Unidas pero con limitación y visión aguda a las tres naciones de Puerto Rico únicamente Tiene que ser reconocida por la Nación Americana y asistir con el compromiso de lealtad y cooperación

mutua en la mejor convivencia con sus dos naciones adyacentes y en otros asuntos pertinentes que requiera nuestra isla nacional.

Aunque la Nación Independiente de PR (NIPR) tiene que ser autónoma legalmente, en su gobernanza y fisco y en su reconocimiento internacional, no cabe duda que requerirá ayuda en sus comienzos de su gobernanza. Tendrán que organizar su seguridad nacional de aire, tierra y costas marinas y para eso se organizara una unión de seguridad integrada por las tres naciones para una protección conjunta una vez la OCCPR y el comando de seguridad de los USA así lo entienda por solicitud de cualquiera de las dos naciones que componen la Isla Nacional de Puerto Rico.

No se requerirá la preparación de su pasaporte porque este existe legalmente pero requiere redactar una constitución según lo dicte su gobierno. Aquellos ciudadanos americanos que actualmente sus creencias políticas no engranen con lo establecido en la Constitución Americana y la que le otorgó su pasaporte y nunca le han jurado lealtad ni lo harán a los USA, deberán entregar su pasaporte para declararle lealtad incondicionada a la Nación Independiente y ser reconocido como ciudadano fiel de esa Nación y solicitar su pasaporte de dicha nación. En el caso que deseen no entregar su pasaporte, la Nación Independiente los afiliara con carácter nacionalista transitorio hasta un máximo de 1 años sin derecho a elegir Presidente ni derecho al voto. Luego serán traídos a la atención del Parlamento de las leyes reglamentarias para considerar su solicitud de cambiar su estatus Transitorio a Ciudadano de la Nación Independiente de lo contrario, considéralos con un ciudadano con estatus de emigrante extranjero independiente de la nación que provenga .. Aquellos que no deseen jurar fidelidad a la constitución de la Nación Independentista y sus postulados y deseen prevalecer en la conviviendo en esa nación tendrán que regirse con todas las disposiciones que le aplican a cualquier extranjero. Las propiedades, negocios, oficinas. Centros Comerciales, Instituciones Comerciales, Universidades etc... quedaran propiedad del ciudadano que resida en cualquiera de estas naciones pero tendrá que pagar contribuciones, IVU y Patentes a la Nación donde resida y cualquier otra disposición establecida por la constitución desea nación y/o leyes.

El resultado esperado por estas condiciones es para evitar que se continúe con la práctica de estar cambiando de partido a partido buscando sus beneficios personales. Esta disposición es aplicables también para los ciudadanos de la Nación Estado Librita de Puerto Rico (NELPR).

Nota de Redacción: Si deseamos obtener una gobernanza diferente a la existente,



pues se debe acabar con la práctica de cambiar de partido pero sin ser leal a sus verdaderos sentidos patrióticos sino leales a sus beneficios personales y/o partidistas. Finalmente cada ciudadano tiene que decidir su estatus legal.

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Relacionado con la seguridad interna del territorio .de la Nación Independiente de Puerto

Rico tiene que presentar un plan de seguridad nacional el cual tiene que ser evaluado y aprobado por la OCCPR que velara por la seguridad nacional de fronteras, límites territoriales y seguridad al ciudadano. Adicional la Nación Independentista se registrará por su propia seguridad interna que su nación declare constitucional sin intervención directa de la OCCPR siempre y cuando no se vea ningún atropello en lo que se refiera a conceptos humanitarios dentro de su nación. En ese caso en particular se convocaría a la OCCPR para traer a colación ante la junta nacional querellas al respecto.

PARTE V- Distribución de "parcela "-Nación Estado Liberalitas (NELPR)

La localización donde se legalizara la Nación del Estado Liberalitas, conocido como Partido Popular, está ubicado en el litoral Oeste de la Isla de Puerto Rico. Sus límites marítimos se extienden desde parte del NORTE comenzando con la colindancia OESTE con territorio Norteamericano hasta el NOROESTE del Océano Atlántico. Continúa por todo el Paseo de la Mona hasta el Mar Caribe incluyendo las Islas de Desecho y La Mona y parte del Mar Caribe por el SUR hasta la colindancia con territorio Norteamericano e incluyendo cualquier de las islas colindantes de dicho litoral Estos límites son adicional a la portación porcentual que le respondería en la distribución de parcela territorial.

Su proporción en la distribución de presupuesto auditado del Gobierno de PR tiene que ser equivalente al porcentaje de territorio cedido a su Nación. El limite litoral dentro del territorio entregado para esta nación esta delineado en el dibujo correspondiente de los límites de las tres naciones y según Módulo #4

Esta Nación tendrá que emitir su pasaporte, reorganizar su constitución y estructura de su gobernanza ya que está compuesta solamente por los ciudadanos nacionalizados y residentes de su territorio.

No obstante, es necesario una definición más clara del tipo de gobernanza que esta Nación pretende establecer. Este Partido Político tiene suficiente experiencia en como gobernar un territorio porque ha estado gobernando a PR anteriormente por bastantes años. Ahora, lo que se pretende en este proyecto de urbanística total para Puerto Rico es cambiar los procesos de gobernanza actuales así que esta nueva Nación tiene que dirigirse a ser autónoma en su gobernanza y considerar que sus vínculos económicos de los USA serán muy diferentes y posiblemente reducidos que cuando gobernaban todo

el territorio isleño. Tienen que crear su propia constitución de gobernanza ciudadana posiblemente muy similar a la actual constitución existente pero con los cambios que

crean pertinentes por su Junta Constituyente donde posteriormente elegirá el presidente de la nueva nación, según Módulo #19

Sus condiciones como nación virgen son muy parecida a la de la Nación independiente que ubica al otro extremo de su localización geográfica.

Por lo tanto, esta gobernanza es mucho más limitada de la cual han tenido en experiencias previas y muy particular porque a los que va a gobernar serán las del "rollo"

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que tanto han abogado. Conocen muy bien a sus pasados adversarios los Estadistas pero desconocen cuáles son los que votan por sus ideales por conveniencias personales .Así que le aplica lo mismo discutido en la Nación Independiente relacionado a su nueva gobernanza. La ventaja principal es que sus elecciones son únicamente para nombrar su Presidente Nacional y una Legislatura y Senado muy reducido en su composición así como un Departamento de Justicia afines de su partido .Libre para un comercio internacional , un Ministerio Educativo poderoso por la reducción de su territorio y control

absoluto de la seguridad nacional terrestre y costera , entre otros para bienestar de sus ciudadanos leales a su compromiso de gobernanza nacional estableciendo y, recordando las medidas que deben tomar para los que no juren lealtad a nación en retener la disponibilidad de entregarles un pasaporte correspondiente a esa nación. Se considerarían como extranjeros pero ofreciéndoles la hospitalidad que los cobije la protección constitucional de compartir su convivencia de hermandad establecida en la Nación. Esa será la diferencia en la gobernanza nueva porque antes gobernaron para ciudadanos no afines incluyendo ciudadanos extranjeros, Estadistas, Independentistas y ciudadanos no leales a su partido.

Relacionado con la seguridad interna del territorio .de la NELPR tiene que presentar un plan de seguridad nacional el cual tiene que ser evaluado y aprobado por la OCCPR que velara por la seguridad nacional de fronteras, límites territoriales y seguridad al ciudadano. Adicional la NELPR se regirá por su propia seguridad interna que su nación declare constitucional sin intervención directa de la OCCPR siempre y cuando no se vea ningún atropello en lo que se refiera a conceptos humanitarios dentro de su nación. En ese caso en particular se convocaría a la OCCPR para traer a colación ante la junta nacional querellas al respecto.

PARTE VI-Condicionales Generales

El establecer los límites fronterizos entre las naciones adyacentes es una función de asuntos de Ingeniería de Ciencias Geográficas y asuntos de levantar un plano de Agrimensura digitalizada geoespacial y ser aceptada por ambos extremos. También el construir el muro o maya divisoria de límites territoriales debe ser pagado por ambas naciones en proporción a la extensión territorial que le pertenezca así como los puntos

de controles de pasos de fronteras nacionales. Esta condición es para acordarse entre las naciones adyacentes según Módulo #6

Es bueno señalar, que tanto para las naciones de la Independencia y la Liberalista no será necesario tener distribuidos los territoriales en tantos municipios. Estos pueden ser reducidos drásticamente y más eficientes. Como en cada nación se reduce los servicios gubernamentales de una manera drástica, tanto los servicios de salud, educación, permisos, transportación, servicios comunales, mantenimiento de carretera, servicios energéticos y fluviales, el dinero recuperado por las contribuciones y el IVU brindaran mayores beneficios.

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Básicamente las dos naciones adyacentes a la Nación Americana operarían bajo los mismos criterios de gobernanza pero cada uno con diferentes propósitos nacionales. Lo antes expresado es un compendio de los temas que a continuación detallan las particularidades de este proyecto tales como el plan energético y servicio de agua potable integrado entre las tres naciones, cooperación integrada de la seguridad de las tres naciones de la Isla Nacional de PR, acuerdos de comercio interestatal ,transportación y la construcción de una carretera Internacional que cruza las tres fronteras nacionales , seguridad en cada punto de control de entrada y salida , límites marítimos y pesca , interconexiones de las redes energéticas y comunicaciones para situaciones de emergencia así como disponibilidad de los centros médicos nacionales, disponibilidad de los diferentes aeropuertos nacionales ,intercambios educativos, tecnológicos e intercambio en educación universitarias, Intercambios culturales y artísticos , intercambios comerciales y seguridad nacional, entre otros asuntos.

NOTA IMPORTANTE

La información contenida en los Módulos del 1 al 45 y del 47 al 48 no está incluidos en este Ensayo. Solo se incluyó el Modulo # 46. Los restantes están disponibles a solicitud del lector.

® Por Wilfredo Valentin Serrano, 2020

Registro de Propiedad Intelectual # P20-135 (Puerto Rico

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**Aníbal Acevedo Vilá**

Testimony

Governor Aníbal Acevedo-Vilá

Public Forum on the draft bill "Puerto Rico Status Act"

House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources

Puerto Rico Convention Center  
June 4, 2022

I'm here in my personal capacity as former Governor and Resident Commissioner. Although I take full responsibility for my statement, the ideas I will present, to a great extent are also supported by the steering committee of the Frente Puertorriqueñista, a non-partisan, political organization created last year to advance the decolonization of Puerto Rico, defend our distinct identity and nationhood, and support the Status Convention as the best self-determination process.

This draft bill, while not perfect, is a step forward in the right direction.

I will make some general comments on the definitions put forward on the draft but will use most of my limited time to make comments on the definition and transition for Free Association.

### Statehood

After more than 120 years of been under US sovereignty and various attempts during the last century to assimilate and diminish Puerto Rican culture and identity, we're still sociologically and historically a nation, with our own language, culture, and identity. Any offer of statehood must address that reality.

- Therefore, there is a need to clarify that under statehood the official language of daily business in the state government, especially the courts, will be in Spanish, as well as that it will continue to be the official language in public schools. That has been the representation made by the statehood party to the people of Puerto Rico. But Congress has demanded in the past that states wishing to be admitted to the Union with different prevailing linguistic groups, such as Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, and Louisiana, adhere to certain English-speaking guidelines. The bill must clarify this.
- When the first three of these states were going to be admitted Congress established that public schools...; "shall always be conducted in English." Likewise, Louisiana's Enabling Act states that: "...after the admission of the said territory of Orleans as a state into the Union, the laws which such state may pass shall be promulgated and its records of every description shall be preserved, and its judicial and legislative written proceedings conducted in the language in which the laws and the judicial and legislative written proceedings of the United States are now published and conducted..."

- Also, there is a need to have clearer transition plan toward statehood, especially regarding the negative economic consequences of federal income taxation.

### Independence

- Regarding independence, there is no moral or political reason to impose upon those who decide to keep their US citizenship a different set of rules to transmit that citizenship to their children, than those living in other foreign countries. Moreover, to establish a different set of rules will be clearly unconstitutional. The language on the bill is not clear about that.

### Free Association

One of the most important elements of this draft is the inclusion of Free Association as a different status alternative from the other two. But, because this will be the first time in US history that Free Association will be available to a territory that has been unincorporated for more than 120 years and whose citizens have been US citizens by birth for more than 100 years, there needs to be more details on the definition and the transition plan.

Starting point: if the United States is willing to offer Free Association it is because Congress has made the decision that this kind of relationship could benefit both parts. Therefore, any bill offering Free Association must include, at least, the elements that Congress is willing to consider as part of the negotiation of a compact of association. Without those clear elements, Congress will be making an offer without any real context.

- The main issue regarding the definition of Free Association is citizenship. Free Association means that the US has some strong interests in Puerto Rico, obviously more than under independence. And that Puerto Ricans want to keep a close, but dignifying relationship with the US. The fact that the day after we become a Free-Associated State, more than 3 million people living on the Island will probably keep their US citizenship, should open the door to making that citizenship one of the bases of the compact.

- On this important issue, the current language on the bill is confusing. The final proposal should include language stating that the US is willing to recognize the right to claim US citizenship to those born in Puerto Rico from a US citizen.

- The language on the draft bill saying that transmission of citizenship will be “for the duration of the first agreement” is a political poison pill with no legal or constitutional effect. It is well known that one Congress cannot obligate another one. If after 25 or 35 years of a compact of Free Association, a future Congress is willing to

extent the automatic transmission of US citizenship, nothing in this bill could limit them in the future. Therefore, that language must be deleted.

- The bill includes the same period of economic transition for Independence and Free Association. Again, if you offer Free Association, it is because you are making an intelligent decision that having a special, close relationship with Puerto Rico is good for both parties. Therefore, the economic transition must be different and more beneficial than the one offered for independence.
- It is in the interest of the US to guarantee to its farmers, retail, and industrial sector free access to the Puerto Rican market. Under Independence, that's something that the government of the new republic will have to decide. But under Free Association, it should be included in the bill that the permanence of a free and open market will be a part of the new compact.
- Many independent countries use the US Dollar as its currency. There should be language clarifying that the US would have no objection that the compact may include the US dollar as currency in Puerto Rico.
- It is also in the interest of the US, under Free Association, to maintain its current mutual defense understanding with Puerto Rico.

If the US is willing to offer Free Association, all these elements must be part of the offer, not only because they will benefit Puerto Rico, but, because they are of interest to the US as well.

Two final general comment.

To move this process forward significantly it must really become a bipartisan bill. And after more than a week since this draft has been made public, so far, we haven't perceived much enthusiasm on the republican side.

From the meetings you had yesterday and the testimonies you will hear today, I'm sure you will get that this is a complicated process, and that there are many details of the different options that need negotiation and fine tuning. That's why many people, myself and those who are part of the Frente Puertorriqueñista, still believe that the Status Convention, as described in HR 2070 is the best procedural option. What you are trying to do in three days, is what the Status Convention and the Negotiating Committee created by HR 2070 will have to do with adequate time

Thanks

Former Governor Aníbal Acevedo-Vilá  
June 4, 2022

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## **Alfred Gonzalez**

Honorable Members of the Congress of the United States of America:

Prior to 1776, there were various intents to free the Colonies from England, and the Colonies sent good faith letters that were rejected by the Sovereign country. Today the Colony is Puerto Rico. Today you are England. However, the good faith solution has come from the Sovereign. Kindly consider three points that may improve this project and the good faith that resides within:

I. Dates of plebiscite should NOT equal the Election Day

The evidence is found in our history. The last fruitless plebiscite done on the Election Day has served only for the government party to be re-elected. We should maintain independence of dates, for events that serve different purposes. We cannot use the plebiscite as a hook to bring more people, and disgruntled voters to the polls. I know the dates have been set, just do not permit the local politics move them to any election day.

II. Benefits and Costs of Each Formula Must Be Clearly Stated and Understood

During the last plebiscite the "Statehood Benefits" won. Not Statehood. The actual Statehood obligations were never informed; therefore, people do not know what Statehood means. I consider a criminal act to impose and promote only the benefits of one formula and hiding the integral costs of it, as mentioned in the GAO report of 2012. The same happens to all formulas. We The People should have the fair opportunity to know what we are deciding for. The information of the costs of each formula cannot be relegated to publicity by the parties in which their biased promotion will contaminate the process and deviate the good faith and intention of this democratic exercise.

III. Neutral Publicity and Education

The Puertorrican parties are good in damaging everything that is put in their hands. Just look at the ELA. Just look at our country today, for the best example. Please do not let them damage the purpose of this great opportunity by giving them free hand to spend in publicity for this Federal exercise. The publicity for all three formulas must come from a neutral institution or be controlled by the US Government and not the political parties. A fair and equal distribution of funds for promoting each formula will bring parity in the bombardment of publicity. NO PAC COMMITTEES SHOULD BE ALLOWED, nor the political parties either, to inform of the benefits (they will not inform costs) of all three formulas. Fairness should be promoted by the US Government.

We the People must be well informed and educated before voting. The future of our

Country cannot be influenced by deceiving political parties.

The Founding Fathers tried to do the best, but war was necessary due to the uncompromising attitude of England. You are the "Founding Fathers" today. You are also England. Deal with justice and good faith knowing that wrong decisions lead to wrong actions. Help us get rid of the Colony status for once and for all by doing a fair job. Please consider my three points above, and God bless Puerto Rico, God bless the United States of America.

By Alfred Gonzalez Hernandez, today June 3rd, 2022, Vega Alta, Puerto Rico.  
Alfred.gonzalez0307@gmail.com

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### **Pablo Millán-Sepúlveda**

Honorable members of congress

In 1897 Puerto Rico achieved autonomy from Spain and at that time it was a sovereign country and the first autonomous province of Spain. We are genetically speaking Europeans for the most part. In terms of international rights USA is occupying a territory that for 405 years belonged to Spain and its citizens were Spaniards. This project is not about self determination, it will be as saying that a kid that has been served hamburgers and pizza all of his life can decide his diet will be all by himself. Please include in the project the alternative "Provincia Autónoma de España" in the selection ballot. Thanks for respecting this appeal.

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### **José Lara**

May 28, 2022

US House of Representatives

Natural Resources Committee

Office of Insular Affairs

Legislative Status Hearings

Honorable Chairman Raul Grijalva and Members of the Committee:

Greetings from Puerto Rico. My name is José Lara, President of "Adelante

Reunificacionistas de

Puerto Rico y España". I speak on behalf of the members of our civic and political association,

legally registered in the Department of State, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

We are requesting for you to consider the inclusion of the Reintegration of Puerto Rico



to Spain  
as one of the valid options available for the Island in the next and future hearings  
regarding the  
Puerto Rico Status projects. Our movement is growing as people are more aware of the  
advantages of becoming an Autonomous Community of the Kingdom of Spain. United  
Nations  
allows for the reintegration of territories separated by war, as a decolonization solution,  
if the  
People of such territories vote for it on a referendum. See UN 1541 (XV)  
We have begun an educational campaign to reverse the damage done by common  
beliefs  
regarding our Hispanic heritage. We are correcting such beliefs with real history. First,  
Puerto  
Rico was not a Colony of the Kingdom of Spain in 1898. It was an Autonomous Province  
with  
its own elected government. Second, Puerto Rico had already gone through a process of  
self  
determination on November 25, 1897. The Royal Decree was confirmed in free elections  
by  
Puertorricans on March 27, 1898. In these elections, the Autonomist Party obtained 80  
percent  
of the votes out of 121,573 legal voters. Third, we did not invite the United States to  
invade the  
island, as many believe. Only a few separatist men did that on their own and without  
consent of  
the people. They were traitors to our country, not patriots.  
Having Spain accepted by the force of arms the only terms offered by President  
McKinley to end  
the 1898 Hispanic American War, The Treaty of Paris was signed and Puerto Rico was  
occupied  
by United States forces. Spain was unwilling to give up the Province of Puerto Rico, but  
did not  
have a choice in the matter. Like the late President Reagan once said, "Puerto Rico did  
not come  
to the United States. The United States came to Puerto Rico."  
Spain and The United States of America have a common history of friendship and  
cooperation  
that dates back to the War of Independence against England, war in which Spain  
contributed in  
not a small part. This friendship was only tainted by the 1898 incident, which has been  
sadly

forgotten. Having said that, we consider that it is in the best interest of the United States of America to Reinforce those friendship ties with The Kingdom of Spain, by returning the Province of Puerto Rico to their own kinship. Spaniards can live better amongst Spaniards. Puertorricans are ethnically Spaniards. 125 years ago the United States of America came to an Island with close to one million of Spaniards that were Spanish citizens. Now, 125 years later, they have an Island with 3.2 million of Spaniards with United States citizenship. We speak and sing in Spanish. We communicate in Spanish at work and at home. We even pray in Spanish at Church. We will never give up our Spanish culture, with or without United States citizenship. The only change achieved by the United States in Puerto Rico has been political. Reintegration of Puerto Rico with The Kingdom of Spain means not only reinforcing our friendship ties, but could also become the legal backdoor to access the European Union markets, where United States goods and services could be sold. Spain and The United States could arrange a variety of commercial treaties that could benefit the flow of merchandise both ways. Instead of having the market in Puerto Rico only, the United States could have access to the whole European markets through Puerto Rico and Spain. The United States of America would also benefit from having a NATO ally living close to its shores, one that can strengthen the National Security of both the US Navy and The Spanish Armada. Working together towards the common welfare of our peoples, we can achieve a better and safe environment for our children. Safety that will come from the national security that both allies could achieve together. Therefore, I respectfully request that you allow me to explain to you and your delegation, on the congressional hearings and on behalf of our association, what the project of the Reunification of Puerto Rico with Spain means to our association, and to all the People of Puerto Rico. Thank you for your kind attention.

Respectfully submitted,  
José A. Lara  
President - Adelante Reunificacionistas

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## **JULIO SANTIAGO-RIOS**

June 3, 2022

Dear Member of the Congress of the United States of America,

Here are my recommendations for the Puerto Rico Status Act for year 2022:

Natural Right for Self Determination and Independence - According to the United Nation 1514 Resolution there is a Natural Right for Self Determination and Independence. An appropriate approach for the "Act" should be: If Statehood or Free Association is not accepted by the US Congress in one or two years, then, Puerto Rico must declare its Independence. The format must be Constituent Assembly instead of a Plebiscito. Then after the status be chosen, we must have a Constitutional Assembly.

Odious Debt - Puerto Rican Odious Debt must be transferred under Free Association or Independence to the Federal Government, who own the sovereignty of Puerto Rico, given that Puerto Rico is an invaded Nation who earned its sovereignty right before the invasion in 1898. The Odious Debt Doctrine was applied between United States and Spain, when Puerto Rico was transferred to the United States in 1898, as well as in other cases.

3. History of Puerto Rican Independence Movement: Its fundamental to understand that Puerto Rico has been in the Struggle for its Independence since more than five hundred years. The struggle has been applied in many ways, including Armed Struggle, which has been detrimental for our Nation as well as your Nation. We, the Puerto Ricans want our Independence for the same reasons that the Thirteen Colonies fought for its Independence against England. It's important to note that many Puerto Ricans fought in that struggle to free the Thirteen Colonies. Despite persecution, discrimination, defamation and assassination of many Independentists, most of that supported by Spain and eventually by the United States, we still in the Struggle for our Natural Right for Independence. Then, its important to note that the Puerto Ricans are not requesting authorization from the United States to start its Self Determination process, because it's

our Natural Right, that also we have earned given our Level of Independence Struggle during centuries.

Respectfully,

Name: Julio M. Santiago Ríos (M, Sc.)

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### **Víctor Federico Torres**

¿Otra consulta sobre status en la que el Congreso decide quiénes son esos "people of Puerto Rico" que van a votar? Para que sea una consulta genuina hay que impedir que cualquier extranjero decida con su voto nuestro futuro político. Y por extranjero me refiero a personas que no hayan nacido en Puerto Rico o de padres puertorriqueños. Si los boricuas de la diáspora no pueden votar, ¿por qué se les va a permitir a extranjeros? Sí, ya sé que como ciudadanos americanos tienen derecho, pero derecho MORAL no tienen ninguno. Eso sólo lo entienden personas con sentido ético. No quiero a ningún cubano, dominicano, chino o de donde sea decidir el destino final de nuestro pueblo. Ya sucedió con Alaska y Hawaii convertidos en estados con el voto de extranjeros, en su mayoría norteamericanos. En ambos estados, existe actualmente un fuerte movimiento separatista. Hay que buscar un recurso para evitar que esto suceda el cualquier próxima consulta. Así lo exige el derecho internacional en consultas de esta naturaleza.

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### **Joel Rivera**

Include in the project the alternative "Autonomous Province of Spain" in the selection form. Thank you for respecting all possibilities for the political status of Puerto Rico. We never chose to be separated from Spain, a colonial status was imposed on us. A state where we are still not going anywhere with any solution. We have been in this "limbo" for a long time. We want the reunification of Puerto Rico with Spain. We would like people to know the truth, to educate people about this possibility, being part of Spain and the European Union. Thank you for listening to us, we are here, and we are Puerto

Ricans Spaniards. We cannot be silenced. Thank you for trying to bring to Puerto Rico the best setting for your political affairs.

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### **Ramiro Rodriguez**

Please also consider as an option a pathway for PR to rejoin Spain as the autonomous province it used to be before the Spanish American War. Please do not dismiss this option as PR has a lot in common with Spain. Thank you.

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### **Francisco Gonzalez**

Dear Chairman Grijalva and distinguished members of the Natural Resources Committee:

Firstly, I would like to thank this Honorable Committee for the opportunity to express our position regarding the Puerto Rico Status Act, the first binding and comprehensive bill to address Puerto Rico's political status.

I appear before this Committee on behalf of the League of United Latin American Citizens, Puerto Rico Chapter. As you may be aware, LULAC is the oldest and largest Hispanic civil rights membership organization in the United States. Since its creation in 1929, LULAC has been dedicated to protecting and promoting the civil rights of Hispanics across our country. As a Puerto Rican, I am a United States citizen of Hispanic heritage and one of the more than 135,000 members of LULAC in 41 states, the District of Columbia and here in Puerto Rico.

Carrying on this tradition, on April 30, 2022, the Puerto Rico Chapter of LULAC approved a Resolution concerning Puerto Rico's status. The Resolution found "...that the current colonial status of Puerto Rico places plenary power in Congress, limits self-government, deprives its people of the tools it needs to improve the standard of living of U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico, and that it is the will of the people of Puerto Rico to redress this situation and attain true equality..." Moreover, the Resolution expressed LULAC Puerto Rico's opposition to "the continuation of Puerto Rico's political status under the Territory Clause" and called upon the President of the United States and Congress to take the necessary steps "to redress the continuing violations of civil rights of the American citizens residing in Puerto Rico." Also, most recently on July 21, 2018,

LULAC's National Assembly has on multiple occasions approved resolutions advocating for admission of Puerto Rico as the Fifty First State of the Nation.

It is a widely held conclusion in academic and political circles that colonialism is inherently wrong and destructive, as well as anathema to democracy, injurious to civil rights, destructive to local economic development, and ultimately demeaning and demoralizing to both the metropolis and the colony. In the case of Puerto Rico, specifically, our status as a territory hinders any significant efforts at economic growth since uncertainty as to our future is hardly conducive to investment. Congress has plenary powers over Puerto Rico, but we have no voting representation. Puerto Ricans have proudly served in the American armed forces and continue to do so, but we cannot vote for our Commander in Chief. Consider that according to the U.S. Census Bureau, between 2010 and 2020, the population of Puerto Rico fell by 11.8%. This is the impact colonialism is having on Puerto Rico.

Furthermore, colonialism is contrary to what the Framers of the Constitution had in mind. In 1787, merely 6 years had passed since Yorktown. The memory of colonialism was very much in the minds of these men, as was the effort to avoid its recurrence. That is why the Constitution of the United States does not contain any provisions for the administration of colonies. Rather, Section 3 of Article IV of the Constitution, also known as the Territory Clause, states in part that "[t]he 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..." It is revealing that this Section 3 of Article IV of the Constitution is also where the process for admission as a State of the Union is established. Territories were not meant to be retained indefinitely; they were meant to become a state.

By 1898, however, the memory of British colonialism had expired and a new race for imperialist possessions had begun. The United States won the Spanish-American War and as a result a number of territories raised the Star-Spangled Banner for the first time, including, and most importantly for our purposes, Puerto Rico. It would not be long before multiple legal questions and controversies required a determination as to how these territories would be governed and these questions ultimately reached the United States Supreme Court. Although there are a number of what came to be known as the Insular Cases, particular attention should be paid to *Downes v. Bidwell*, 182 U.S. 244 (1901), where a distinction between incorporated and unincorporated territories was first made, and *Balzac v. Porto Rico*, 258 U.S. 298 (1922), which held that although the Jones Act had granted U.S. Citizenship to residents of Puerto Rico, it did not incorporate the territory and Congress could therefore decide which parts of the Constitution would apply. It is because of this judicial distinction that Puerto Rico's current colonial status has been upheld and has endured for 124 years, including 70 years as the

Commonwealth.

In 1950, Congress passed, and President Harry Truman signed, Public Law 600 which provided for the organization of a local government in Puerto Rico under its own constitution, much like the States. In 1952, the Constitution of the Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico, or the “Commonwealth” as it is known in English, was ratified. This created the illusion of autonomy and a false narrative that a bilateral agreement existed between the United States and Puerto Rico. In turn, this allowed for the claim that the Commonwealth was not a colony and that it somehow existed outside of the Territory Clause. This fallacy persisted for more than 50 years.

However, this carefully created fiction of the Commonwealth as anything other than a colony began to unravel in this century. In 2005, the President’s Task Force on Puerto Rico’s Status issued a report reiterating, in pertinent part:

The commonwealth system does not, however, describe a legal status different from Puerto Rico’s constitutional status as a “territory” subject to Congress’s plenary authority under the Territory Clause “to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory ... belonging to the United States.” Congress may continue the current Commonwealth system indefinitely, but it necessarily retains the constitutional authority to revise or revoke the powers of self-government currently exercised by the government of Puerto Rico. Thus, while the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico enjoys significant political autonomy, it is important to recognize that, as long as Puerto Rico remains a territory, its system is subject to revision by Congress.

Additional chips in the Commonwealth’s armor appeared in the following years. In a 2012 local referendum, the first question asked citizens whether they wished Puerto Rico to remain subject to the Territory Clause of the Constitution. A clear majority of 53.97% of constituents voted “NO”.

In 2016, by virtue of the Territory Clause, Congress passed Public Law 114-187, also known as the “Puerto Rico Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Act” (PROMESA). 48 USC §2101, et seq. One can argue the merits and flaws of PROMESA extensively. However, its authority over any local law, including Puerto Rico’s Constitution, is unquestionable. PROMESA is the practical manifestation of Congress’ plenary powers over Puerto Rico.

Also in 2016, the United States Supreme Court issued its opinion in *Puerto Rico v. Sánchez-Valle*, 579 U.S. 59 (2016). In short, the Court reasoned that Federal sovereignty was granted by the States, whereas Puerto Rico’s sovereignty was granted by the Federal Government. The Supreme Court concluded that Puerto Rico’s self-government

was subordinate to the Federal Government in general and to Congress specifically through the Territory Clause. This holding was reiterated as recently as two months ago in *United States v. Vaello-Madero*, 142 S.Ct. 1539 (2022), where the Court found that pursuant to the Territory Clause, Congress could give U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico different treatment from U.S. Citizens in any of the 50 States.

In the last 2 decades, all 3 branches of the Federal Government have declared that Puerto Rico's current political framework is completely at the mercy of Congress' authority, without voting and proportional representation. In other words, that we are a colony. However, although we cite *Vaello-Madero*, *supra*, as an example of this, we must also note that it revealed the precarious footing that the Insular Cases currently have. In both Justice Gorsuch's concurring and Justice Sotomayor's dissenting opinions, the Insular Cases were heavily criticized. Justice Gorsuch went as far as stating that "...the time has come to recognize that the Insular Cases rest on a rotten foundation. And I hope the day comes soon when the Court squarely overrules them."

Two conclusions can be drawn from the factual background discussed. The first is that Puerto Rico's current political status is colonial in definition, nature and effect. The second is that Puerto Rico's colonial status is unsustainable. As we have seen, colonialism is ultimately detrimental to both the metropolis and the territory. This is particularly true when considering that the United States was born out of war against colonialism and has served as a beacon of democracy to the world ever since. The Constitution does not allow for colonial possessions, and it is only due to the mistakes of history that are the Insular Cases that it has been allowed to continue for this long. Moreover, the people of Puerto Rico have rejected the territorial status. Final resolution of Puerto Rico's status is proper and necessary, and it cannot happen under the current *Estado Libre Asociado*. The *Estado Libre Asociado* is the problem, it cannot also be the solution.

Resolution of Puerto Rico's status is beneficial to the United States as well. The advantages of a prosperous Puerto Rico, serving as a bridge between the United States and the Caribbean and South America, are evident. And an answer to the question of Puerto Rican status will serve to reassert America's place in the world as an example of democracy.

The Puerto Rico Status Bill is a democratic and viable mechanism for the final resolution of Puerto Rico's political status. But it can only be so as long as it calls for a direct vote, the options given are noncolonial/territorial, and the result is binding. Given that these elements are present in the consensus bill being discussed, we believe it is compatible with the Resolution approved unanimously by the Puerto Rico Chapter of LULAC. Therefore, LULAC Puerto Rico, acting by virtue of the Resolution of April 30, 2022,



endorses and supports the Puerto Rico Status Bill.

Once again, we appreciate this opportunity to express our position on such an important subject.

Cordially,

Francisco J. González-Magaz  
Legal Counsel  
LULAC Puerto Rico

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### **Nestor Duprey**

Public Hearing on the "Puerto Rico Status Bill"  
U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Natural Resources  
Convention Center, San Juan, Puerto Rico  
June 4, 2022

Statement  
Dr. Nestor R. Duprey Salgado

I am grateful for this Committee's invitation to share with you some brief reflections on the draft bill regarding the future of relations between Puerto Rico and the United States that is before you.

First of all, I want to make it crystal clear that my opinions and comments reflect the dictates of my conscience and my mind, and only represent me, as a Puerto Rican historian and political scientist. I believe in the recognition of Puerto Rican sovereignty through a compact, treaty, or agreement of Free Association between the peoples of Puerto Rico and the United States of America, linked by a common history of more than a hundred years and human, geographical and economic ties that require mutual understanding to solve the colonial conundrum that the current relationship exemplifies. Free Association is not an option that is without support, quite the opposite, it has the support of Puerto Ricans who, beyond partisan differences, recognize it as the best path forward for the people of Puerto Rico in their relationship with the United States. I have defended and defend Free Association, not out of convenience, but out of

conviction. That's why I'm here.

Secondly, I think it is fair to thank both Chairman Grijalva and Majority Leader Hoyer for their interest in reaching a consensus document between the measures presented by Resident Commissioner González and Congresswomen Velázquez and Ocasio Cortés. From now on, this document, which we hope will be translated into legislation in the coming days, is the starting point in the unavoidable negotiation that will culminate in a process of mutual determination on the future of the relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States of America. I speak of mutual determination and not of self-determination because the public policy decisions that will be reflected in the legislation to be discussed and approved, will eventually state public policy determinations of the federal government, as well as the will of the people of Puerto Rico.

There are three core issues that require public policy decisions by the federal government and that will affect the final content of this draft legislation. How these issues are addressed will predetermine the response of the people of Puerto Rico to this offer of constitutionally viable options.

- First, the bill under consideration compels the United States to decide that the policy toward the territory of Puerto Rico, to require a different treatment from the other territories in terms of the possibility of maintaining the territorial option, due to Puerto Rico's population extension and the particularities of the relationship. What is desirable and even convenient for other territories, due to their particularities and interests, for Puerto Ricans is undesirable and no longer viable; and I suspect that's the case for the United States as well. The territorial option under any name is contrary to the best interests of the people of Puerto Rico and delays the solution of its problem for the United States: how to dispose of the territory by offering a decolonizing option in the face of the political and economic unsustainability of the colony or territory, as well as the inconvenience or unviability of statehood from the point of view of the United States' interests. In the cases of the Philippines in 1934, Alaska and Hawaii in 1959, and the trust-administered territories in the Pacific in 1983, Congress legislated, as required, to address specific territorial issues, without applying those solutions to the other territories. Now Congress can do it too.

- Secondly, the United States as a government, through its political branches (executive and legislative) has to decide whether to offer the option of statehood to Puerto Rico with a commitment to grant it, and under which terms and conditions. The self-enforceability provision contained in this draft explicitly entails the acceptance of a petition for admission of the territory of Puerto Rico as a state of the Union without knowing beforehand what are the terms and conditions of that admission, which we imagine will be the same as the other territories in the political, economic, and cultural aspects. We all know that clause has been the graveyard where past efforts to promote congressional legislation on the issue of Puerto Rico's status have been buried. It is time for the U.S. government to answer that question itself, and for the people of Puerto Rico to know that answer.

- Thirdly, the choice of sovereignty for Puerto Rico, under Independence or Free Association, implies a public policy decision by the federal government regarding the future of U.S. citizenship of Puerto Ricans born in Puerto Rico and their descendants. The United States Congress legislated in 1916 to extend that citizenship to Puerto Ricans, which has been ratified in subsequent laws. The particularity of a nationality composed of citizens of another country was not the product of a decision by Puerto Ricans, it was a unilateral act of the United States Congress. As in 1916, the issue of the U.S. citizenship of Puerto Ricans requires political will and pragmatic recognition of the particular reality of the relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. Anything is possible if there is the political will to do so. Due to the close relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States in the economic and national security scope, including the vulnerabilities of the Puerto Rican border, both peoples are required to design a transition process to Independence or a Free Association Compact that recognizes these particularities. Issues such as citizenship, the continuation of economic assistance programs, the future of the integration of the Puerto Rican economy to the U.S. economy in monetary, market, investment and mortgage market aspects, as well as other fields of that free trade area, that in practice is currently limited by the colonial relationship, compel the United States and Puerto Rico to design a pathway towards sovereignty that recognizes that community of interests and takes into account the particularities and mutual convenience of that relationship.

Once the United States government determines its position on these matters, the people of Puerto Rico will be in a position to responsibly exercise their right to self-determination. I am sure that, in the case of Sovereignty, these considerations, and addressing them in a practical and realistic way, will make it possible for the United States to count on a worthy partner in the Caribbean. Puerto Rico aspires to a social market economy integrated into the world, that maintains the close ties of historical, geopolitical, and economic reality with the United States, with a fully democratic system of internal government, of recognition of freedoms, including leaving behind the stain that more than a hundred years of colonialism represents for both peoples. The peoples of Puerto Rico and the United States need to decide the future of our relationship in a way that recognizes our mutual interests and designs a path to solving the colonial conundrum. This bill, now as draft, is a step in the right direction. The proponents of Free Association will be submitting amendments to the bill to further clarify the provisions relating to such sovereignty option. The conversation has begun. We must go on.  
Thank you.

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## **Luis Herrero**

Testimony

Luis S. Herrero-Acevedo, Esq

Public Forum on the draft bill "Puerto Rico Status Act"

House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources

Puerto Rico Convention Center

June 4, 2022

My name is Luis S. Herrero Acevedo, I am a lawyer, political consultant and commentator.

I would like to start by commending the draft proposed bill and the process led by Majority Leader Hoyer and Chairman Grijalva. Getting proponents of statehood and sovereignty to discard old tropes and bring forth new ideas and processes to resolve Puerto Rico's centenary political conundrum is no small feat. "Gracias Nydia y gracias Jennifer por sentarse y hablar."

In theory, this is how the democratic process should work. Thank you once again for getting it done. If approved by Congress, this draft bill will send a clear signal of what a democratic majority in the House of Representatives is willing to offer Puerto Ricans. The draft is a starting point for future discussions and a solution to the status issue.

But, as we all learned in elementary school, a bill does not become a law until approved by the Senate and signed by the President. And, therein lies the problem...

As a political consultant, I understand very well how politicians talk on the record, especially on the congressional record, vis a vis how they talk behind closed doors. Everyone on the dais, and every politician who has served in the Natural Resources Committee since the United States took Puerto Rico by military force, has had multiple off the record conversations about Puerto Rico. And everyone on the dais must agree, off the record of course, there are no votes in the Senate to make Puerto Rico a state.

Not today, not yesterday, not tomorrow.

Since 1898, Puerto Rican statehood has been a mirage, lip service to score cheap political points or raise a few dollars for a campaign. I compare it to a mythical animal, much talked about but never seen. A unicorn

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## Josue Rivera

Statement from Mr. Josué E. Rivera

In favor of HR 1522 - "Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act" and in favor of the new compromise draft bill, the "Puerto Rico Status Act."

Good afternoon, Chairman Grijalva, members of the Natural Resources Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives, current and former officials of the Government of Puerto Rico, and my fellow Americans.

I am Josué Emanuel Rivera Castro, resident of Guaynabo, Puerto Rico. I'm a public servant, former State Director for Puerto Rico at the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Rural Development, former Policy Advisor at the Office of the Governor of Puerto Rico in Washington, D.C., Former National President of the Puerto Rico Statehood Students Association, and current Ideas Fellow of the Aspen Institute.

For the record, I am not here in any official capacity, nor to represent the Aspen Institute or any areas of the Federal Executive Branch, but rather as a private citizen concerned about Puerto Rico's political and economic future. I assume full responsibility for the ideas I will present in this statement covered by my first amendment right.

There is a saying that goes as follows: "it is better late than never." Therefore, please accept my sincere appreciation to all parties for reaching this historic agreement.

Your leadership and detachment in finding common ground is, without a doubt, key to resolving the long-overdue colonial relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. A special acknowledgment to The House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, New York 7th Congressional District Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez, and our own Resident Commissioner Jenniffer González Colón for this valiant effort.

Nevertheless, we all know that the common ground here in Puerto Rico is that WE "Puertorriqueños" treasure our American Citizenship, the Constitution, our love for freedom, the pursuit of happiness, our belief that all men are created equal, and we

cherish our multicultural-multilingual link between mainstream America and our Puerto Rican culture. Therefore, "Yo soy Boricua (and American) Pa' que tu lo sepas".

Statehood does not change that, but the two other options of independence will. As mentioned before, I come here in support of HR 1522, "Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act," and the Draft bill, the "Puerto Rico Status Act," which provides the American citizens residing in Puerto Rico a process to exercise our right of self-determination – this time through a binding self-executing process initiated by federal sponsored legislation.

The American Flag has flown over Puerto Rico since 1898. In 1900, Congress established a civilian government on the island through the Foraker Act. Nevertheless, in 1901 the Supreme Court stroke this Act with the *Downes v. Bidwell* decision, and its progeny held that for the Constitution's Uniformity Clause, Puerto Rico was not part of the United States and was subject to the plenary powers of Congress, which turned it into a colonial relationship ever since.

Congress needs to act with a sense of urgency. In 1950, Congress passed Public Law 81-600, the "Puerto Rico Federal Relations Act," but with the passage of "Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act of 2016" (PROMESA) and recent Supreme Courts determinations like *Vaello Madero vs. the United States of America*, once again, Congress and the Supreme Court reminds us of all that the centennial colonial relationship is still present and pending resolution.

Again, as an American, I strongly support the admission of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico as a state of the Union. It is the best path forward, given that we have had a relationship for over 120 years. A relationship that binds the U.S. and Puerto Rico by sharing and benefitting from the economic, cultural, political as well as societal aspirations of our people.

For the draft bill in the discussion, I'm concerned about the educational campaign for the two options of independence included. As a clear reminder, independence has never been an option favored by most people in Puerto Rico, as evidenced by all local plebiscites held up to this point. This Congress needs to address many important questions about the two forms of independence and instruct the Executive Branch of the U.S. Government on how we will effectively transition the over 10,000 federal civilian employees and military services members, including their families.

Second, estimate the cost of that transition. Are we going to fire them?

Third, there needs to be an estimate of the impact and cost for the residents of the Republic of Puerto Rico and the implications of ending federal programs that currently benefit our most vulnerable, our low-income communities, women, children, elders, veterans, and socially disadvantaged small businesses in Puerto Rico?

Fourth, what is the cost of the new nation's defense? What is the cost of admission to the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and many other international institutions and regulating bodies? What are the processes and implications of

establishing currency, insurance for natural disasters, taxation, and managing current and future debt obligations?

How many embassies will Puerto Rico have, and what will be the cost to the people of Puerto Rico to operate them?

What happens to the investment certainty and economic-market risk?

Fifth, what will be the U.S. Citizens' current benefits and responsibilities lost with these two independence options.

I'm also concerned that the two options of independence will continue to sponsor citizenship for the residents, that's against the United States Constitution and our National Interest. Citizens living in a nation under COFA are regarded as Nationals. Therefore, I'm proposing an immediate transition to U.S. Nationals status for all residents of Puerto Rico in one of the two types of independence: the electoral winners. Regarding the legislative process in Congress, I urge you to advance this proposal - the Puerto Rico Status Act. In my opinion, the best path forward for the people of Puerto Rico is statehood. But I invite all other parties to join in supporting this draft bill.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

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### **José Nieves-Seise**

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. In 1898 Puerto Rico was a Spanish overseas province with political equality. After the US invasion we lost that equality and became an unincorporated territory of the United States of America without political equality and that is being a colony. We Puerto Ricans are Spanish and were separated against our will in 1898. I hereby ask you to include the Reunification of Puerto Rico with Spain in the binding plebiscite that will take place in 2023. Reunification is Integration and is recognized as a decolonizing formula .

Sincerely, José Nieves-Seise.

Former President of the Reunification Movement with Spain.

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### **Bert Marchand**

Puerto Rico is a Nation – culturally, sociologically and anthropologically. Sovereignty it's an inherent inalienable right of any nation. Saying that, after almost 125 years as a US colony and 400 years as colony of Spain – I believe that the best path for Puerto Rico to transition to a Sovereign Nation is Libre Asociación (Free Association). I congratulate

the Committee for taking the morally righteous decision to include this Path(option) as a logical step to decolonize Puerto Rico. The Transition mechanisms/agreements toward National Sovereignty via FA or full independence is a recognition that the colonial oppression to US (Puerto Ricans) – in the island, mainland or anywhere deserves a responsible and restorative process by the Colonial Power. The most recent example of this responsible Transitional process is England and Barbados. Please take time to study this example as a way to improve the bill.

US Citizenship in this Transition process is the most significant component from the perspective of this restorative moral obligation. It's great step by the Committee to put US Citizenship as a central aspect of this Transition. Our Colonial history has deep rooted myths and disinformation with regards to US citizenship. Therefore the bill needs as most detailed clarification in this matter to eliminate ambiguity and misinterpretation. From my view, the 21st Century, common citizenship agreements (double/triple citizenship) is the norm and the bill should reflect that.

Now to this Statehood option. Hawaii is the only Island Archipelago State. This brings me to our closest neighbors fellow US Citizens of the US Non-incorporated Territory of the Virgin Islands. Together, the 3.2 million in PR and 500k in USVI – we have more US Citizens living in these 2 Caribbean colonies than about 30 States! If Statehood is to be seriously considered by US Congress – the moral path is to have these two Caribbeans colonies joined as the 2nd Archipelago State. It is the right and moral path to Statehood for the almost 4 million US Citizens that call the Caribbean their homeland. Together they would have 2 US Senators and about 5/6 congressional districts. Now, this would be a serious and consequential commitment to finally end US Colonialism in the Caribbean.

Thanks to the Committee for moving forward in a serious and courageous effort to end our current Colonial condition. At last, I want to Highlight the fact that we have 3 Puerto Rican women are part of this Commitment and have taken up a leading role in this process and have shown to us the capacity to sit down and dialogue to achieve compromise. This is a great example to it people but as parent of a daughter as great role models to our Daughters.

Un Abrazo Solidario

Humberto Marchand Paonessa  
Retired Federal Law Enforcement Officer

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## **Paola Gonzalez**

For far too long Puerto Rico has been condemned to the shackles of imperialism and colonialism. I am beginning to feel like the richer individuals and politicians who stand up and advocate for statehood against sovereignty are merely too lazy to put in true work into our country. That they would rather not have to worry about how to enhance our agricultural practices, better our education system, or invest in the Puerto Rican people.

I suppose they do not notice how many have fled our land because the government chose to sell Puerto Rico as a paradise to Americans rather than take care of the paraíso we already had.

At the end of the day it feels like the most proponents of statehood share their concern for is US citizenship - something that I am aware could be lost should the other options win. But what we could end up losing should P.R. become a state, include our culture, our language, our individuality, our people.

It feels like not one of them has looked toward our Pacific Islander neighbors of Hawai'i, who continue to lose native populations to an increase of American travel, gentrification has driven up prices, and the travel industry has cost them vital environmental resources.

It is not too late for us to invest in ourselves. I guarantee if there were incentives for native Puerto Ricans to move back instead of Americans they would do it in a heartbeat because they carry their patria wherever they go. I guarantee there is a diaspora of Puerto Ricans longing for the home they left behind.

With that being said, countless diaspora Puerto Ricans have left due to many issues that can be traced back to the imperialism and colonial status imposed by the U.S. Due to this, I wonder if there might be a way to include their voices in this discussion as well, and even in the final vote...?

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## **Karina Claudio Betancourt**

Testimonio de Karina Claudio Betancourt ante el Comité de Recursos Naturales de la Cámara de Representantes de los Estados Unidos

Saludos estimados Congresistas y al personal del comité de Recursos Naturales de la Cámara de Representantes los Estados Unidos. Muchas gracias por darme la oportunidad de dirigirme a ustedes en el día de hoy.

Mi nombre es Karina Claudio Betancourt. Soy residente de San Juan, Puerto Rico. Y como mucha gente joven y queer en Puerto Rico, vivo los estragos del colonialismo a diario. En esta colonia no vivimos, sobrevivimos. Es un constante negociar entre la mediocridad de la austeridad y los recortes de servicios impuestos por la Junta de Control Fiscal; y el deseo de realmente ser feliz y vivir plenamente en este país. Y creo que esto es realmente una de las cosas que más duelen de ser una persona joven en esta colonia – la amamos, la atesoramos, defendemos férreamente sus playas y su tierra, nuestro derecho a ser y amar a quien queramos amar... Pero el gobierno de turno nos niega nuestro derecho a vivir con plena equidad, mientras van a Washington y les piden a ustedes igualdad de derechos como ciudadanos de los Estados Unidos.

Producto de la situación colonial puertorriqueña, los partidos que han controlado la política en Puerto Rico – el Partido Nuevo Progresista y el Partido Popular Democrático--ambos han apoyado legislación en contra del derecho al aborto, el derecho de las comunidades LGBTQI y han criminalizado la pobreza mientras se llenan los bolsillos de fondos federales corruptamente. Por otra parte, una Junta de Control Fiscal impuesta por el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos sin consulta alguna a los puertorriqueños, ha recortado el presupuesto de la Universidad de la que con tanto orgullo me gradué – a más de la mitad. También ha hecho recortes a servicios esenciales como el transporte público, los servicios médicos y el arte y la cultura – elementos que mantienen felices y saludables a nuestra población, y aportan a nuestro crecimiento económico como país. Además, La Junta ha cerrado cientos de escuelas, dejado a miles de Puertorriqueños sin pensión digna y negociado nuestros servicios públicos – todo para pagarle a los buitres de Wall Street a quienes todos ellos sirven. La privatización de nuestro sistema eléctrico impuesta por la Junta es algo que nos afecta a diario. Semanalmente hay recortes de electricidad y perdemos cientos de dólares en compras que se dañan por esta ineficiente compañía que ninguno de nosotros eligió. Ningún Puertorriqueño que conozco apoya la junta de Control Fiscal, pero por nuestra situación colonial no tenemos forma de librarnos de ella, a menos que ustedes legislen desde Washington. De igual manera los dos Presidentes que nombraron personas a dicha Junta – Obama y Trump, ni yo ni ningún otro puertorriqueño viviendo en el archipiélago pudimos votar por ellos. Entonces estamos de acuerdo que el problema de la colonia es insostenible. Y es por esto que me uno a la conversación acerca del Puerto Rico Status Act, porque entiendo que ya es hora de resolver el problema y la situación colonial de Puerto Rico, pero también les exhorto a que este proceso no sea uno acelerado; y que por el contrario no se repitan los mismos errores que con PROMESA, cuando de manera no democrática se nos impuso una Junta que nos ha hecho miserables.

Aunque agradezco – personalmente y en nombre de la organización que represento – La

Fundación Open Society – los esfuerzos del comité, entiendo que hay muchas maneras de mejorar el borrador de la propuesta de ley y la manera en el cual están llevando este diálogo---particularmente para involucrar y escuchar a les boricuas más impactados por la tenacidad de la colonia. Los problemas que desde nuestra organización y nuestros aliados locales hemos identificado en este borrador de proyecto de ley incluyen: la falta de detalles y claridad en ciertas opciones de estatus, un lenguaje que intenta inclinar a los puertorriqueños hacia una opción de estatus particular (la Anexión) y que el Congreso quiera dictar qué tipo de República establecería Puerto Rico bajo la independencia. También hay problemas con la definición de la ciudadanía Estadounidense bajo el estatus de Libre Asociación, y varias cosas que el borrador no menciona, como ¿qué pasará con la deuda de Puerto Rico bajo las diferentes opciones de estatus?, ¿y qué pasará por ejemplo con el idioma de control para las leyes, escuelas y tribunales, los impuestos federales, y el comité olímpico en Puerto Rico bajo el estatus de la Estadidad?

Otros aspectos del borrador que nos parecen problemáticos:

- Los votos en blanco no se contarán (pág. 5)
  - o Esto es problemático porque impide y margina a los votantes que no están de acuerdo con las opciones o el proceso de expresar sus voces.
- Como mencioné anteriormente, en la definición de estado, no hay referencia al idioma, impuestos, representación olímpica (P. 8)
- El Congreso no puede instruir a un Puerto Rico independiente para que realice una asamblea constituyente ni instruir sus procesos internos de ninguna manera (p.15-16)
- El Congreso no puede imponer qué tipo de constitución o forma de gobierno puede tener un Puerto Rico independiente (p.16-17)
- El lenguaje en el borrador del proyecto de ley parece implicar que la ciudadanía estadounidense no se puede transmitir, aunque un ciudadano estadounidense que tenga un hijo en otro país pueda hacerlo. (pág. 23)
- El proyecto impone la forma en que el nuevo estado libre asociado ratificará artículos en lugar de dejarlo al proceso constitucional establecido por Puerto Rico (p. 38)
- Esta propuesta legislativa establece una transición de 1 año en el caso de la estadidad. (pág. 42) y procesos más largos para las otras opciones de estatus
  - o Es imposible salir de 124 años de dominio colonial, imponer impuestos federales, trazar líneas legislativas e introducir gradualmente normas y reglamentos federales que actualmente no existen en la isla en un año. Esto es engañoso para el pueblo puertorriqueño ya que presenta esta opción de estatus como una solución rápida.
- Puerto Rico permanecerá no incorporado hasta la admisión (P. 42)
  - o Esto también pretende inclinar la balanza hacia la anexión porque cada territorio se ha incorporado a la unión antes de ser admitido. Texas no lo fue porque primero fue independiente. Todos los demás fueron incorporados, lo que significa que pagaron impuestos federales sobre la renta sin representación durante un período de tiempo

hasta que el Congreso decidió admitirlos como estados.

Y nuevamente, menciono las cosas que no se mencionan en el borrador:

- Cero mención de la participación de la diáspora puertorriqueña en esta votación.
- No se menciona la aplicabilidad de la Ley Jones o la falta de ella en las opciones de estatus.
- No se menciona cómo se tratará la deuda de Puerto Rico.

Y finalmente, reiteramos nuestro deseo de que se lleven vistas del Congreso en Puerto Rico en español, y vistas en Washington DC de manera bilingüe, para tener un récord oficial de las diversas opiniones del pueblo Puertorriqueño acerca de este proyecto.

Como persona joven, también quiero reiterar que la juventud en Puerto Rico ya no confía en los partidos políticos tradicionales (no sé si han visto ayer como en la graduación de la Universidad de Puerto Rico abuchearon al gobernador Pierluisi, por ejemplo) y que cualquier proceso que se lleve en Puerto Rico debe tener un elemento de alcance que llegue a los jóvenes, y que también fiscalice el rol de los partidos coloniales (PNP y PPD) en este proceso...ya que muchos hemos visto como los partidos tradicionales han utilizado referéndums pasados para favorecer su opción de estatus y mover sus agendas partidistas.

Muchas gracias nuevamente por su tiempo y quedo atento a los próximos pasos y a que se mejoren estos elementos en el lenguaje del borrador antes de ser presentado el proyecto de ley en el comité.

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### **Tony Rivas**

Is there a way the United States can support Puerto Rico's independence and also form an American Union alliance similar to the European Union except with Puerto Rico? This way after it becomes independent we can still use USA currency, apply for an American Union passport which will allow citizens of both nations to live, travel, work and get educated in either country freely. I think this option could make all sides happy.

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### **Jesann Gonzalez Cruz**

Dear Chairman and Honorable Members of Congress,  
I applaud you for taking critical steps forward in drafting a bill that includes binding legislation to end the colonial status Puerto Rico is currently under. I am happy to see a vibrant conversation being generated as to what the future of Puerto Rico should consider and hope to see many of the panelists' remarks tended to in future drafts. That

said, I foresee two topics that have yet to be addressed in the current discussion: 1) voter turnout and 2) the statistical breakdown of the vote when considering a “majority”. Throughout the recent past, Puerto Rico has faced declining and/ or low voter turnout. Considering the draft is binding, will there be a benchmark percentage of voter turnout required to ensure the vote is representative and just? Second, if the free association with the United States option is considered a form of independent sovereignty as depicted in the bill - this splits the sovereign vote, creating an unjust advantage for statehood voters. For example, if 40% vote statehood, but 30% vote independence and the other 30% FA than the majority appears to align with statehood but actually 60% of the populace voted for some type of sovereignty. This should be taken under consideration and perhaps necessitates an initial vote for statehood vs sovereignty and a secondary vote for the type of sovereignty. Thank you for your time and attention. - Jesann Gonzalez Cruz

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## **Elisa Munoz**

Statement by  
Elisa Muñoz  
President, Young Democrats of America Puerto Rico Chapter  
before a panel of members of the  
United States House Natural Resources Committee  
June 4, 2022

My name is Elisa Muñoz, and I am the President of the Young Democrats of Puerto Rico (YDPR).

First and foremost, I would like to thank you, Chairman Grijalva, for allowing me to address the members of the Committee.

I also wish to commend Congresswomen Jenniffer González and Nydia Velázquez for putting aside their ideological differences and working on a consensus bill to establish a federally-binding process that will finally allow the Americans who live on these Islands of Puerto Rico to have our voices heard in Congress about the type of political relationship we aspire to achieve with the United States, which I firmly believe will be Statehood.

I would also like to recognize Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio’s presence today and her steadfast support for young people, and for this process.

A large majority of us – the 3.2 million Americans who live in the oldest colony in the world – believe in decolonizing Puerto Rico and that we must continue “causing good trouble” to achieve our full civil rights.

The National Platform of the Young Democrats of America recognizes our desire for political equality and states as follows:

“We believe Congress must act on the will of the people of Puerto Rico and approve an enabling act with terms for Puerto Rico's admission as a state of the Union. The people of Puerto Rico have exercised their right to self-determination, resulting in overwhelming support for Statehood. Thus, we support granting the full admission of Puerto Rico as a state of our Union.”

YDPR believes that our rights as American citizens should be fully secured, and that no American in this great country of ours should have to choose between remaining in the land of their birth or the opportunity for a better life in some far away land. As has been well documented, Puerto Rico has been suffering from a major brain drain since our recession began in 2006, which has only worsened after Hurricane Maria. According to the 2020 Census, over 300,000 people between the ages 25-65 have left our shores. My peers continue to seek a better quality of life and struggle with job, health, and food security after the COVID crisis, and we believe that if Puerto Rico were a State we would not feel the need to seek better opportunities away from our families. We are tired of being treated worse than any other American in the nation.

If Puerto Rico were to become a State, we would have the political power to have our voices truly heard in our Nation's capital when legislation is being considered and approved in Congress. For example, our current colonial disenfranchisement silences the voices of the women of our Islands on the matter of reproductive rights. It silences everyone in our Islands on the matter of climate change, which has severely impacted our coasts during the past five years. There may very well be parts of these islands that will be underwater by the time I am eligible to receive our second-class Medicare benefits.

As the daughter of a Bronx-raised, U.S. Army, Purple Heart recipient, Vietnam veteran (may he rest in peace), and as a Type 1 diabetes patient since I was six years old, I can give testimony of the immense suffering that our family has had to endure because of the discrimination that the Congress and the federal government have imposed upon us by limiting our access to federal healthcare and other social programs. This discriminatory treatment and the burden that it has placed on the very people that these programs are meant to assist have had a cascading effect on the availability of quality healthcare for and of the social well-being of all the Americans in Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico has been a colony of the United States for 124 years; this is the longest any territory has gone without being admitted into the Union. This is not just morally wrong, its plainly un-American, and our country, through its leaders like yourselves, needs to rid itself of this stain in its moral fabric.

In the words of President Kennedy, I beseech you to: “not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer but the right answer.”

That right answer is equality through Statehood for the 3.2 million Americans that call these beautiful islands their home. The consensus reached between the Puerto Rican Members of this Congress contained in the federally binding status legislation being considered by this Committee is a step in the right direction.

I thank you for your time.

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### **Francisco Proskauer Valerio**

Submitted on behalf of the General Coordinator of Movimiento Victoria Ciudadana's Autonomous Statehood Network, Mario Toro:

Good afternoon,

My name is Mario Jesús Toro, 'General Coordinator' for the 'Autonomous Statehood Network' of the 'Movimiento Victoria Ciudadana', a recently created, progressive, people-powered and community-centered political party in Puerto Rico. The Autonomous Statehood Network proudly represents the statehooders that have found a political home in the most progressive political party in Puerto Rico.

I am twenty (20) years old. In that short lifespan, my life experience has been one of farewell after farewell to close family members and friends, who have sorrowfully opted to emigrate in search of the opportunities they can't find in their own islands. It's not hard to find the main culprit: our current woes are in large part due to the collapse of the colonial Commonwealth model.

In the fifty (50) states there are Puerto Ricans settling down roots and developing within the challenges and successes that the opportunity to access their open borders and their labor markets entails. The sovereignty of the states allows for the adoption of multiple

official languages and the design of a government that is accessible and responsive to all of its citizens, regardless of the language they speak. State sovereignty also makes it possible to promote each culture and exalt the identity and traditions of each People. There has been a development of Puerto Rican identity within the United States longer than there has been a Puerto Rican identity outside of the United States. The United States, for its part, increasingly celebrates its diversity and multiculturalism. Today this is represented in its federal system with the participation of a Puerto Rican woman in the highest judicial forum, the 'Supreme Court of the United States', and with several Puerto Rican Congresspeople who today are a triumphant example of the tireless march towards freedom and equality that Native Americans, African Americans and immigrants hailing from all corners of the Earth have made an essential and inseparable part of the American Federation.

In the past decade, two (2) self-determination exercises have been clear in their decolonization mandates. In two-thousand-and-twelve (2012), a fifty-four percent (54%) majority decided to end the colonial status quo. Then in two-thousand-and-twenty (2020), a fifty-three percent (53%) 'majority' decided to join the United States by choosing "Statehood" again. This referendum reflected a democratic majority for statehood in Puerto Rico. It is clear that the People of Puerto Rico want to exit the territorial clause. This anti-colonial consensus bill acknowledges this. For the 'Autonomous Statehood Network', this consensus bill also respects and adequately addresses both democratic mandates on the table by providing a binding and self-executing opportunity to end the colonial 'Commonwealth' status and to finally decolonize Puerto Rico with "Statehood".

We recognize that the most important development about the consensus bill, consistent with the proposals made by 'Victoria Ciudadana', is summarized in the following: that Congress offers a binding and self-executing process to decolonize; that it only includes the three (3) plausibly "non-colonial, non-territorial" options under the United States Constitution and international law; that it provides for an informed process where the People will know what each option entails; and that it be the 'majority' of the People freely choosing a winning option, an objective that is guaranteed with the run-off mechanism.

In the 'Autonomous Statehood Network' we are satisfied with this consensus bill and wish to respond to some of the criticisms that have been raised.

The consensus bill resolves the two (2) main objectives of a 'Constitutional Status Assembly': first, to commit Congress to act on the self-determination mandates emanating from Puerto Rican democracy by providing a binding and self-executing process that includes a formal offer of the options outside the territorial clause; and



secondly, to bring together the anti-colonial forces in a procedural consensus with only non-colonial, non-territorial options on the ballot, with their corresponding transitions, in a federally-endorsed process.

The consensus bill contemplates a thorough, publicly-financed educational campaign that is sufficient to combat any disinformation on the process and the status alternatives. We need there to be open, ample and public deliberation with accurate information about the process, so everyone can make a fully informed decision in the most transcendent election for Puerto Rico to date. But that is not to say that Puerto Ricans are not 'educated' enough to make an informed decision, as some argue in bad faith. We have been discussing the future political status of Puerto Rico since the United States first acquired the islands, and before even, as a colony of Spain. The time for talk should be concluding soon. The time for action is now.

Some have argued that the definition of "Statehood" should include information regarding the federal tax burden and the corresponding changes that would require to our state tax system. We understand that this is not necessary because the tax laws affect citizens differentially. Most people in Puerto Rico would not have a tax liability due to their income levels, and the reconfiguration of our state taxes is a public policy decision to be made by the State of Puerto Rico. But if Congress decides to include information relevant to that topic, by way of equal justice and procedural consistency, then Congress would also have to do it for each decolonization option with equal space and content. Much has been said about the Puerto Rican desire to retain the American citizenship in the other two (2) options. With this we want to underline that under "Independence" Puerto Ricans who retain their American citizenship and live in Puerto Rico will have to file federal taxes. That issue remains a question that depends on the negotiation of the pact in the case of "Sovereignty in Free Association". American citizenship for those who already have it or future generations under those options will be determined by this process. But if we are going to talk about federal taxes, the truth is that all American citizens would be subject to them under both options, same as it would be for any American citizen residing abroad.

We congratulate Puerto Rican Congresswomen Nydia Velazquez and Jennifer Gonzalez for joining efforts for the decolonization of Puerto Rico. Also to leader Steny Hoyer and Raúl Grijalva for what has been achieved so far. We acknowledge the titanic work of Puerto Rican and American constitutional law professors Rafael Cox Alomar and Christina Ponsa-Kraus in pushing for and consulting on this consensus bill. And lastly, we want to emphasize that as pro-statehood progressives, we see ourselves represented by like-minded leaders like Mia Bonta, Ritchie Torres, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and Darren Soto who are raising our flag with a new generation of progressive Puerto Ricans in America. We look forward to being able to collaborate, from within and from outside

the island, for a Puerto Rico in full equality within the American Federation. We trust that this anti-colonial consensus bill represents a big step in that direction and has our support.

Yours truly,

Presentation by the 'Autonomous Statehood Network' of 'Victoria Ciudadana' for the 'Puerto Rico Status Act' and its "Public Hearing before Congress" in Puerto Rico.  
- by Mario J. Toro, General Coordinator, on June 4, 2022

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### **John DeMicoli**

This bill is a farce that is being coopted by the corrupt pro statehood PNP. Statehood is the death of Puerto Rico and our culture. A person in an abusive relationship may make a strategic safety decision to marry their abuser hoping to lessen the abuse, but that doesn't make it the right - or safer - thing to do. Independence with debt cancellation and reparations (which would set a precedent for reparations for Black people) is the only thing we should be talking about.

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### **Wilberto Santiago**

Any bill should ask Puertoricans to choose between statehood and independence. The third option will only add to the confusion and prolong the conflict over the status. It's time to end this 124 years issue. Puertoricans deserve equal treatment and a peaceful transition to statehood or when joining the international community of states.

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### **Alejandro Lopez**

I have witness/lived the Puerto Rico status conversation over 42years now. For 22yrs in the island and the last 20yrs at the states.

It's an understatement to say it is complicated. Moreover, there are three strong political views in the island, which regrettably deny a general consensus. It goes without saying

there is a fundamental disconnect.

It is my believe the last puertorriqueño that had a successful congress status conversation with a socioeconomic strategy was Governor Luis Munoz Marin with his 'Operation Bootstrap'. It wasn't perfect, however it was a starting point, an initial conversation with Congress as a strategy to develop and modernize Puerto Rico's economy.

That conversation then had numerous professionals and scholars from the island. The people that understood and care about the island immediate and projected future, furthermore how the island would introduce itself into a competitive shifting economic market.

There are numerous topics that branched out of this economic initiative and legislation. Perfectly imperfect, but regardless necessary to move forward.

The reason to run commentary on this specific isolated topic, is the fact Puerto Rico should be allowed to make its own decisions, hence developing strategies to push onwards and plan the next decades of sustainability for the island socioeconomic infrastructure.

Recently it has been evident that a selective few benefit from the status discourse, in lieu of being an all inclusive community/ island conversation.

The puertorriqueño scholars, doctors, architects, engineers, young entrepreneurs, historians and educators... "The Puerto Rican People" (from all sectors) should be leading this conversation. Separately, it would be beneficial for Congress to provide the opportunity to enforce transparency in the island. Something the last cycle of local governments have failed to deliver to the people.

A viable solution and direction cannot be reached until these individuals/ sectors further advance this strategy and/or negotiation with congress.

Alejandro LopezVelez  
hi@alzvz.com

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**Milton Maury**

Dear members of congress, Nidia Velázquez, Alexandria Ocasio Cortés, Raúl Grijalva, Jennifer González-Colon, Governor Pedro Pierluisí, and everyone alike.

My name is Milton Maury Martínez. I speak as an individual and not on behalf of any entity, although I participate in many organizations, for example, League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Concilium 14267, which unequivocally supports Statehood for Puerto Rico. I have lived in the states as well as in Puerto Rico. I have seen what inequality looks like.

We the people/citizens of the United States of America, living at the islands of Puerto Rico, Possession of and Land of our Nation, have been a willing part of the United States of America for well over a CENTURY. But you already know this.

This is who we are, part of our Nation.

We have consistently and democratically expressed our will to become a full-fledged state of the union, thus ending COLONIALISM.

We ask for equal rights AND responsibilities like any other state of the union.

Isn't it ironic that if YOU decide to stay here at Puerto Rico, you lose the right to equality? This is plainly wrong, unjust, and shameful, to this date.

Support the will of the people of Puerto Rico, through a fully democratic process with the direct vote of every able citizen. I am sure that people will choose their NON-Colonial future WISELY.

Fortify democracy in our nation, listen to our request, and the request of our families and friends in all states. We need to do what's right, A state of the union. It's time to ACT, no further obstructions should be permitted. Finalize this draft and submit it for voting.

This will make our nation be even bigger, and have one more shining STAR, whilst enhancing the respect of all nations towards the U.S., as leaders of democracy. Puerto Rico is diverse like all states And treasures our nation's way of life.

Thank you for hearing me, have an excellent evening, "here, as this is also your LAND".

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## **Roberto Santiago**

Puerto Rico was an integral piece of Spain's sovereignty for more than 500 years and to further add to that Spain's first autonomous community. The option for reunification with Spain should definitely be included in the possible coming referendum!

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## **Juan Garcia**

In the S 244 project led by J Bennett Johnston these 2 items were conceded for Commonwealth

Allows the Governor of Puerto Rico to certify that the Puerto Rico legislature has adopted a resolution that states that a Federal law should no longer apply to Puerto Rico because there is no overriding national interest in having such law apply to Puerto Rico. Provides that a Federal law so certified shall no longer apply to Puerto Rico if a joint resolution approving the recommendation of the Puerto Rican Government is enacted. Sets forth procedures for consideration of such joint resolution.

Authorizes the Governor of Puerto Rico to enter into international agreements to promote the international interests of Puerto Rico as authorized by the President

So PR could say that a law does not apply to Puerto Rico not related to security  
Example The Cock fights prohibition

And Puerto Rico could enter into commercial treaties with other nations

With these 2 items no one can say that Commonwealth is a colony

Respectfully submitted  
Juan Garcia

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## **Frank Rivera III**

Please support an independent Puerto Rico. The US has taken all that it's wanted from the island for too long and our people deserve to do as they choose and not be governed

by PROMESA or suffer inflationary burdens due to the Jones Act. Soberano Puerto Rico. You even told us we could fly our flag because it represented the independence we have sought since the colonization of the island. Free Puerto Rico from the shackles set in it by the United States. Support a free Puerto Rico by supporting its right to self governance and determination.

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### **Claudia Alayon**

The only options that should be presented to our people should be statehood or independence. Having three (3) options to include sovereignty via free association would only serve to split the vote for the people who oppose statehood. Additionally, this would increase the pro-statehood discourse through unfair and inaccurate results. This has happened in the past and is a big reason why our people have not taken our previous referendums seriously.

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### **Victor Perez**

June 4, 2022

Distinguish Congressional guests:

Thanks for the opportunity to provide us, the US citizens living in Puerto Rico, with the opportunity to actively participate and be responsible for determining our collective future status in

relation to our nation. Last Monday, May 31, 2022, we gather to solemnly remember our heroes

during the Memorial Day activities. Looking around the thousands of people (around the world)

presenting their respects to our heroes and their families, it became evident that we're considered first

class citizens to SERVE and DIE. However, while we ratified our citizenship with our military

service the respect and dignity of our DEMOCRACY the one, we have sworn to protect and defend is

not fully applied to us.

We need to embrace our duties and responsibilities along with our rights and benefits as every other

PROUD Patriot and citizen of our great nation. A long time ago I swore to defend our

Nation from  
enemies, Foreign and Domestic. Statehood will HONOR that statement embracing all  
individual  
differences in the melting pot that DEMOCRACY provides. Who believes in equality  
and fair  
treatment of those who will honor the opportunity to actively participate in this exciting  
process will  
always be remembered. Let's move forward and see how much we can accomplish  
together as an  
equal partner. Always ready to serve!

Rafael Mendez, 787-210-5180  
r.mendez.acosta@gmail.cQrn

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### **Esdras Juarbe**

We, Puerto Rico, deserve our independence. Nos merecemos nuestra independencia, es  
cuestión de moral, dignidad, respeto y prosperidad.

If the United States call themselves the land of the free and under the name of  
democracy they fight wars, why haven't they given us our independence? Isn't  
independence a human right? A right that, we, as individuals, deserve? Isn't the United  
States an advocate for defending the sovereignty, liberty and democracy of foreign  
nations? Hypocrisy.

Members of Congress, please listen our people and not corrupt politicians. I'm a 17 years  
old and I do care about my island and people's future, and I will not recognize my self a  
full American and either I want to see my island, Puerto Rico, becoming a state. Our  
hearts belong here, shall you honor that.

A Nation that's incompatible with mine shall not rule us.  
We should rule ourselves.

I completely support a fully independent and sovereign Puerto Rico; Republic of Puerto  
Rico, and I do believe in joining the world, not the United States.

If we are not granted our independence in which we have been fighting for more than a  
century, then, your government and laws should be ruled by hypocrisy and impunity.

¡Que viva Puerto Rico Libre!  
- Esdras Juarbe

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### **Tiffany Lazo-Cedré**

Another plebiscite is a waste of money and resources that will again be manipulated by corrupt government officials or result in zero action. Instead, the government should direct their resources and investments to fostering local businesses, infrastructure development (the roads of Puerto Rico are shameful), and education.

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### **Merari Fernandez Castro**

After reading the Puerto Rico Status bill, I understand the statehood definition is vague and doesn't explain the economical implications if Puerto Rico becoming a state. For example, are Puerto Ricans going to pay federal taxes? What economic analysis has been made to determine whether the people of Puerto Rico can afford to pay federal taxes? How statehood will make living in Puerto Rico more expensive? In addition, there is no explanation on language imposition and international sport representation if becoming a state. Also, how is statehood going to prevent the influx of Americans moving to the island to take advantage of tax benefits regular local Puerto Ricans have no access to.

In terms of the independence for Puerto Rico explanation, there was an explanation of how federal funds will decrease slowly but it doesn't mention a plan to substitute those federal funds. For example, some authors like Javier Hernández mentions in his books how that process could take place by 1) the elimination of "leyes de cabotaje", 2) control of tourism, 3) allowing Puerto Rico to control the fees paid to the federal aviation administration to Puerto Rico, 4) protecting local businesses products from unfair foreign businesses competition via legislation so local businesses can have tax and other incentive advantages.

Thank you very much,

Merari Fernández Castro

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## **Bianca Serrano**

If god forbid Puerto Rico were to become a state Puerto Rican culture would slowly cease to exist. Pride, nationality, and moral would be lost to another imperialist country. Puerto Rico must be free!!!!

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## **Carmen Kortright**

A good friend of mine was raped, sodomized and abused for many years by her boyfriend who, on top of everything, has also been unfaithful and has put her in jeopardy many, many times and given her several diseases from those encounters. Sure, he pays some of the bills but what she doesn't realize is that this has been a win-win situation for him because he makes money off of her (I won't go into details because it's just too horrible and humiliating).

Because this is an abusive relationship that has gone on for so long, she has no self esteem whatsoever and she believes she can't survive without him. She also believes she'll turn into a bad, abusive person without his "guidance". She believes she has the solution: demand that he marry her so he can do her "justice".

This is Puerto Rico asking for statehood, in a nutshell.

I believe in the good will of the congresspeople spearheading this project but I don't trust a plebiscite managed and conducted by the bipartisan machine that has held Puerto Rico hostage for decades. And the U.S. government KNOWS them, KNOWS what they are all about and collaborates with them actively because even though colonialism is unlawful, illegal, degrading, wrong... it is the best status for the U.S. to have Puerto Rico under. Talk about hypocrisy from the Land of Democracy!

Also, what's with the people who spoke yesterday before the committee? How did the organizers hand out the spaces for the people who spoke? The panels were INUNDATED with people from pro-statehood organizations. These people have money, have connections, have power, do not represent the typical middle class (what's left of them; I consider myself part of the working, educated, not on welfare yet, poor) Puerto Ricans. They support laws enacted by the local, corrupt political establishment to flood Puerto Rico with people from the Mainland that use the island to evade paying taxes while the rest of us DROWN under low salaries, high cost of living, laws that protect

employers and leave employees at their mercy, with no protection. These people don't live in the same Puerto Rico where I live. And THOSE PEOPLE, are the ones YOU chose to listen.

The current governor, from the New Progressive Party... he won with a 33% of the votes. Is that a majority, truly? Right now that party is being "investigated" by the feds. Those investigations are the crumbs the Federal government give us to pacify us but I'm sure they KNOW about everything that has been going on with these people, and they've known for ages.

The governor's sister and campaign manager works with him at La Fortaleza and because she doesn't earn a salary for her efforts... that's honky dory. Doesn't this remind you of Trump and his kids? How is this not illegal? We know that a salary is the least important thing you get out of working in La Fortaleza. Connections, influence, information... that is worth so much more.

That same governor appointed a board of lobbyists, paid by ALL PUERTO RICANS to represent statehood in the Federal Capital. Shouldn't that be paid by his party? Because those people DO NOT REPRESENT MY VIEWS.

And that is the governor, that is the government you wish to put in charge of the plebiscite. You are part of the problem then.

After 124 years of lies, abuse, half-truths, so much wrongdoing, despair, propaganda, gaslighting... the People of Puerto Rico are so damaged that the majority is not capable of making a rational decision on this subject. We don't trust our abilities, we don't trust our capabilities, we don't understand the concept of freedom, liberty and justice for all and that those things ARE OURS from the moment we are born, without the need for a plebiscite or Congress or the United States.

Please tell me HOW YOU are going to deal with that before we vote on a rigged and bipartisan (PNP/PPD)-controlled plebiscite. Not even your hearing yesterday was fair! There was no "equal representation" at all of all the views on this issue.

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**Eric Ortiz Baez**

PUERTO RICO NEED THIER INDEPENDENCE FROM USA BUT KEEP THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH UNITED STATES. BECAUSE THE PUERTO RICO ECONOMY

NEED TO BE RESOLVED BY PUERTO RICAN NOT BY AMERICAN GOVERNMENT.  
IF PUERTO RICO OBTAIN THE INDEPENDENCE OBTAIN THE REASON FOR  
MAKE THE SOLUTION FOR WHAT IS BETTER FOR THE ISLAND AND THEIR  
CITIZENS. THE INNER ISSUE OF PUERTO RICO ARE THE PUERTO RICAN  
CITIZENS ISSUE NOT AMERICAN PEOPLE

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### **Ramon Crespo**

Gracias a los congresistas Raul Grijalva, Nydia Velázquez, Darren Soto, Alexandria Ocasio y Jennifer Gonzalez por estar de acuerdo en presentar este borrador. si ustedes enérgicamente lo respaldan, no importando los detractores, los Estados Unidos de America se convertiría en una nación más poderosa al añadir 3.3 millones de personas para defenderla. Además nos sacaría de ser ciudadanos de segunda clase ante el mundo. Soy un americano (a orgullo) nacido en un territorio llamado Puerto Rico. Mi bandera USA, segunda bandera PR.

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### **L. Rivera**

The option of Reunification with Spain should be available to all Puerto Ricans. Puerto Rico, an autonomous province of Spain, never decided to separate from Spain, it was separated without the consent of the people in 1898. The Reunification option is the most natural status option for Puerto Rico.

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### **Allison Raffel**

AOC is antisemitic and refuses to meet with Jews in her neighborhood. She should be ashamed of herself and her blatant disregard for Jews in her district. Her stance on ending funding for Israel, while continuing to support sending foreign aid to every other country that the US sends aid to, is antisemitic and a double standard. Her stance against Russian sanctions while wanting to sanction Israel is also an antisemitic double standard. I'm glad she's willing to help you guys, but she's a bigot and should be held accountable for that.

You should also consider working with politicians who aren't bigots. But unfortunately, politicians are largely selfish, and selfish people are usually bigoted, whether towards Jews or other groups.

Good luck to you. AOC sucks.

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## **Luis Santos Santiago**

Estimado Comité de Recursos Naturales y Distinguidos Congresistas:

Mi nombre es Luis Santos Santiago soy un joven residente del pueblo de Gurabo, Puerto Rico soy parte de la Juventud del Movimiento Victoria Ciudadano actualmente los jóvenes de Puerto Rico nacimos en una crisis y sobrevivimos en una crisis continua en donde no tenemos educación accesible, Pocos Servicios de Salud y Pocos Desarrollo Socioeconómico en Puerto Rico.

Propuestas para el Puerto Rico Estatus Act:

1. Establecer el tiempo necesario para que cada ciudadano de Puerto Rico sea educado de manera Inclusiva y Vinculante.
2. Eliminación de la Junta de Control Fiscal y toda deuda ilegal en el Gobierno de Puerto Rico.
3. Antes de la aprobación de Puerto Rico Estatus Act todos los congresistas visitarán el territorio de los Estados Unidos Puerto Rico para que puedan conocer de cerca la crisis que se vive en este país.
4. Establecer que el presidente de los Estados Unidos visitará el territorio de los Estados Unidos, Puerto Rico para la firma final de este Proyecto para demostrar el compromiso de su gobierno ante Puerto Rico.
5. Para establecer en el Proyecto que si el compromiso de los Estados Unidos es genuino en no tener un territorio incluíran en el Proyecto que las Islas Virgenes de Estados Unidos y otras Islas del Caribe que son territorio serán parte del estado de Puerto Rico.
6. Para establecer en el proyecto de Estatus de Puerto Rico que antes de aprobar este proyecto todos los problemas ambientales, gentrificación y Socio Económico.

7. Establecer en el proyecto que Puerto Rico no sera un Paraiso Fiscal para los Inversionistas.

8. Para establecer que para aprobar el Proyecto de Puerto Rico Estatus Act y sea uno vinculante el Sistema Electoral de Puerto Rico tendra que ser establecido de una manera Vinculante con todo la ciudadanía del Pais, Organizaciones y Grupos Politicos esto ya que el Partido Nuevo Progresista aprovo un Sistema Electoral en Puerto Rico de manera no Vinculante e Inclusiva.

El Pais de Puerto Rico tiene que ser el Dueño de la Democracia de su Pais.

9. Para establecer que cada ciudadano de Puerto Rico no se podra abstener ante la eleccion del Puerto Rico Estatus.

10. Para establecer en el Proyecto de Estadidad que en cuando esta sea establecida que los impuestos sean menos que otros estados ya qe seremos en estado mas pobre de los Estados Unidos.

11. Incluir en la opcion de Estadidad que cada Estado de los Estados Unidos incluyendo Puerto Rico tendra una representacion en el equipo Olimpico de los Estados Unidos, estos participantes podran portar banderas de su preferencia con el objetivo de que puedan llevar la bandera de su estado representado.

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## **Waldemar Rosario Iñigo**

Honorable members of the House Committee on Natural Resources,

The current status in Puerto Rico has been very beneficial to all. Bankers have laundered money, politicians have gotten kickbacks, lobbyists have bought regulations.

However, we also obtained college degrees, served in the military, achieved goals in sports, science, medicine, businesses, etc..

We are smart, genius level smart, and also brave and compassionate.

In my opinion, all we need in PR for now is to include the vote for the President, and abolish the Jones Maritime Act. Let the people decide if they want to keep the current status plus President and no Maritime Act. Note that the party that pushes for statehood will indeed claim the ownership of Government if we become a state, as they do now. We all know Congress will not accept to change the balance of power by admitting PR as a state.

A sensible transition, or empowerment, starting with voting for the President, will

increase visibility among all Americans and future Presidents will make sure they take care of PR if they want to get a big chunk of our votes.

We have had many corrupt politicians and many are pro statehood.

For example, in recent years, many jumped to illegally buy and sell, invading beach front Real Estate allowing the buyer to believe "their beach" is private. Beaches are classified as public domain in PR, construction is illegal for over 65 feet from where the wave breaks during a storm. But they allow false permits, Natural Resources destruction, favors to donors, friends, and others. These are some of the internal problems currently being addressed by regular citizens.

This committee, in my opinion, should allow PR to have the current status but empowered, as a choice in a plebiscite.

Also note that defining Independence as PR becoming a "red head step child", tells a lot about your prejudices.

On the other hand, if you assume that all the pro statehood proponents are decent and truthful like "scout honor", tells me you are naive.

Before voting, the voters should be totally informed, straight from the source, you, and as it happened with the current status (E.L.A.) that was accepted back in 1952, by more than 80% of the available voters, this time should have a similar turnout.

If you do not present viable solutions, many voters may not support the process and this will hinder the outcome.

At least the following choices should be offered:

1. Statehood
2. Independence w/ partnership
3. E.L.A. w/ President and no Maritime Act

I am committed to work for the betterment of my Island regardless of what choice the People will make.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my opinion.

Respectfully,

Iñigo  
Veteran / Civil Service Ret

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**Eduardo Torrech**

Any offer of statehood for Puerto Rico (ELA) is illegal because the island is a territory

not incorporated. In order to qualify for the offer, US Congress has to legislate first the status of incorporated territory.

That could be the offer. A responsible plebiscite will be ELA > incorporated territory > independence.

But you want also to exclude the status quo legislated by your Congress (Law 600) in 1952, and ignore the Supreme Court decisions in the Insular Cases.

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### **Carlos Moya**

Please make it clear that any arrangement other than statehood or the current commonwealth status WILL result in the loss of U.S. citizenship for both the Island's inhabitants and possibly even island-born Puerto Ricans living on the mainland. An education campaign should be done to educate Islanders on the power senators and the 3-5 member congressional delegation the Island stands to gain.

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### **Alex Flores**

I support the discussion to solve the Puerto Rico Colonial Status in the next years to come. The Draft needs several amendments.

Puerto Rico has been a colony of the two powers of the times, Spain and United States for more than 400 years. Both have neglected puertorricans to be on our own will. Do not judge puertorricans for the traitors to the Puertorrican Nation, who have govern to steal the wealth of both of us, PR and USA. We are 9 million puertorricans in the world, not only we, who lives in the archipelago. Borikén, Vieques and Culebra are the archipelago.

Changes:

First, tell the truth. USA will never give the Statehood to our Latin People. So, the vote will continue with status that both would accept.

Second, take the Statehood out of the discussion. So, the US Senate can also vote on the Act.

Third, only puertorricans nationals can vote, in USA, or in any country in the world that they may live. You will be surprised all the countries where a puertorrican live.

Forth, no foreigners living in Puerto Rico may vote. This is only our own subject.

Fifth, the debt will be paid. But the good debt, not the dirty debt. Good accounting helps

to have fair business.

The actions of the Congress will tell us what do you want. If this Act is for real or another circus. Personally, I do not trust the American Government for their actions of the past against the Native Americans, and against Puertorricans who have live towards independence.

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### **Eduardo Troche**

I think the resolution of the PR political status is long overdue. I hope that this approach is a serious one no matter what the outcome may be. The territorial status must not be considered as decolonization option because it is the root cause of our problems. The Congress must commit to implement without delay whatever the choice is from the direct vote of the people of PR.

I hope this has nothing to do with political strategy. 100+ years is more than enough of beign US citizens without vote for those who take decisions that have direct impact in our lives. I hope this time we put and end to the colonial status and have a fresh start either as a new state of the union or as an independent nation with or without association with the USA.

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### **José Hernández**

The bill excludes commonwealth status, which is supported by at least 46% of Puerto Rican voters.

It is worrisome that progressive Democrats are willing to promote their personal preferences on this issue by disenfranchising such a large portion of the voters.

Its ok if they dislike the commonwealth alternative, but it is ugly to impose their will over the people's will.

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### **José Vázquez**

Any discussion of decolonization must start with the recognition that Puerto Rico is a Latin American and Caribbean nation and consideration of any status option should



start from that premise - including US statehood. There is no equivalent of a nation-state in the US. The closest example would be Quebec in Canada. That province is given special authorities (in immigration and other cultural matters) in recognition of its unique character. Would PR be allowed the same? For ex, would Puerto Ricans retain their separate national teams and cultural international representation under statehood? Would there be a recognition that, as a nation (like Quebec, Scotland etc), it would have the right to exit the union after admission if it so chose? Let's not pretend the admission of PR would not be a novel situation for the US wish would be admitting a Latin American nation as a state (among its 50 majority anglo speaking states). Ignoring this reality and being open about it in order to address the future is a disservice to both PR and the US.

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### **Esteban Bermudez**

My name is Esteban Bermúdez, citizen of the city of Caguas in Puerto Rico. These expressions and opinions are only my own, although I do participate with other organizations in favor of the bill. I will attempt to be as succinct as possible. Also, for the record, I favor independence, but I will try to look at all options fairly and provide recommendations for each. I hope that my comments are seriously considered and carefully analyzed.

In Section 5, paragraph (3), the meaning of majority should be defined.

Section 5, (b) (3): Sovereignty in Free Association with the United States is relatively vague about the implications of the Articles of Free Association. In general, the option of Sovereignty in Free Association will have trouble in being a favorable option in relation to the other two because its consequences are unclear. I do not know if it is part of the purpose of this bill to define what things can be negotiated as part of a Free Association relationship with the United States. However, it would be favorable for voters to know what would be the result of this type of relationship, so as to inform voters in a way that they can decide if the form of Sovereignty in Free Association agreed upon is what they desire. Otherwise, the consequences of this alternative will be known *ex post facto*, which might be problematic for both those who voted for this option and those who voted for the other options, if it were to win. This could potentially give an unfair advantage to either statehood or full independence because their consequences are defined more clearly, are relatively well known, and might represent their interests better in the face of uncertainty about Sovereignty in Free Association. In general, this previous concern also applies to Sections 209, 210 and maybe a few others related to this

status option.

In Section 6, paragraph (a) I have a concern regarding the availability of voter education materials specifically at the voting locations. This might be used by the local Elections Commission to sneak in propaganda skewed in favor of or against certain options. Although the Elections Commission should be impartial and fair in all directions, past elections (especially in 2020) have shown that this is unfortunately not the case. In addition, guaranteeing a transparent and fair process specifically within the voting locations is more difficult than in the traditional media outlets that are public for everyone to see, but in particular locations the options that are underrepresented or not favored by the majority might be unfairly disadvantaged.

In Section 11, paragraph (3) refers to a "subparagraph (B)" that is not present in the current section (maybe it refers to a subparagraph in PROMESA?).

In Section 105, the composition of the Joint Transition Committee is not specified, while in the Bilateral Negotiating Commission of Section 209, this composition is stated as 5 appointed by the President of the United States and 5 appointed by the presiding officer of the Constitutional Convention. In addition, I think these people should be elected from among the members of the Constitutional Convention, as with the Bilateral Negotiating Commission, and not appointed unilaterally by the presiding officer.

In Section 110, paragraph (b), how will the United States ensure that the Government of the nation of Puerto Rico will not use the Social Security funds for any other purpose than its intended one if it will already be an independent nation with its own self-government and decision-making? I am not saying this will happen, and hopefully it doesn't. But given the known fact that, even within the current status where the United States actually has the power to dictate what Puerto Rico can do with its federal funds, there have been many instances where the funds are used for purposes to which they were not intended, it's difficult to trust that this will not happen again in independence. Even if this was not the case, in theory the Government of the nation of Puerto Rico could find reasonable justification to use these funds elsewhere in a completely fair and beneficial manner, and this law would be interfering with the rights of a sovereign Puerto Rico to do as it pleases with its public funds.

While comparing the processes of independence and sovereignty in free association, I noticed that submission and ratification have different periods, 1 and 2 years, respectively. Is there a reason for this or was this a mistake?

In general, regarding the option for statehood, I agree with what many other groups and individuals have argued. It might be problematic to include the option of statehood in a

manner that essentially admits Puerto Rico as a state in such a short period of time compared to the other two options. Although in theory it might seem that Puerto Rico's governmental, administrative and financial structures will not change significantly when becoming a state, I think there should still be a transition period as with independence and sovereignty in free association. In fact, as far as I know, all states that have been admitted into the Union have become incorporated territories before becoming a state. Therefore, stating in this bill that Puerto Rico will transition into a state in a year or less will make approval of this bill into law very difficult if not impossible. The local Popular Democratic Party is already in talks with Republicans to put a stop to this bill and if statehood can be implemented so "easily", it will make it even more difficult.

About the status options, under NO CIRCUMSTANCE can the current territorial and colonial status known as Estado Libre Asociado (ELA), and referred to as "Commonwealth" wrongly in English, be included as an option in this bill. The root cause of many problems in Puerto Rico is the colonial status and the solution to the problem cannot be the problem itself, no matter how much the proponents of this undignified complain.

Last, but most definitely not least, the issue of Puerto Rico's debt must be addressed in this bill, as many others have said. Puerto Rico's government has made several decisions recently that will make any of the options non-viable in the long term, since its plans for the future are unsustainable. Along with the departure of the Fiscal Oversight and Management Board, the debt must be reduced even more significantly than it already has or even eliminated completely, if not assumed completely by the United States as the imperial authority.

Respectfully submitted,  
Esteban G. Bermúdez

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**ere eme**

In 1898 two unauthorized citizens of Spain with no legal standing met with the government of the United States offering the Spanish Province of Puerto Rico to the United States. Taking us from province to colony The province of Puerto Rico had by a majority, voted to become an autonomous province of Spain better than what Canada was to the United Kingdom. This granted far better economic and political terms than what even a State of the USA has and still does. I want my country to be returned to

Spain where we belong. Our culture, blood, and history unite us.

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### **Reinaldo Rdgz**

Mr. Grijalva et al. a fully self-governing political status for our Island obviously is not Statehood (that would be the outcome of colonization) nor free sovereignty. Try yourselves as representatives of USA to design a healthy relationship with Puerto Rico afterwards Independence. We will be free.

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### **Jorge Aponte**

The House Committee on Natural Resources:

My name is Jorge E Aponte, a resident of Guaynabo City, Puerto Rico[1]; born and resident of Puerto Rico. The following is my written testimony (not the oral transcript) of my position regarding the DISCUSSION DRAFT[2], the object of the Public Input Forum on Puerto Rico Status Act Discussion Draft[3] on June 4, 2022.

Someone said for the record that Puerto Rico is Hispanic and that's going to bring a lot of trouble. And I just recalled the history of New Mexico and Arizona; being part of California, then of Mexico and now both are States. Furthermore, a summary of the geographical colonization history of the USA is that Spanish territories comprised the Atlantic plains, from the Carolinas to St. Augustine, and southern Georgia to Mobile. The Pacific side was Spanish from Oregon to Baja California and east to Houston. There was also a French colonization, from Louisiana to Ohio, and Native lands remained in the Midwest and central north until it was colonized, mostly by Europeans. I had to bring to the record that being Hispanic is part of the multi culturalism and diversity that the United States of America is enhancing in all venues; it is a plus!

Let me say, to start, that I believe in the character and the work being done by Alexandria Ocasio Cortés, Nydia Velázquez, and obviously Jenifer González, and Mr. Raúl Grijalva. And you are welcome because you have demonstrated that the value of bilingualism. And that is a true example of what the Puerto Rico people will deliver in the United States, by assembling different people. And some people won't lose their pensions earned outside the 50 states.

I will address some non-legal related specifics, since so many people are focusing about legalities of these and that, and so many experts confuse.

I don't represent any group; I tend to look for taxes and things like that because I'm a CPA on my own.

So, on accounting of the votes, Section 5 (a) (3), states that "Approval of a status option must be by a majority of the valid votes cast", but item (b) (1) recognize that some noncompliant votes will not be counted. However, since the current Puerto Rico Electoral Code (Public Law 58-2020) requires an accounting of blank ballots made available to each electoral voting room, blank votes and nullified votes somehow must be accounted, to ensure integrity of the votes in the ballot (i.e., valid votes cast and blank and null add up to the total made available at the beginning of the voting day). Then, this might get more complex if ballots are to be counted manually or by means a scanning machines. So, I suggest the Committee take a closer look at this procedure. Otherwise, people might argue negatively about results after the votes are casted.

The Committee must become aware that the Puerto Rico Electoral Commission is in a financial and administrative crisis, and that it might collapse the process unless it is overhaul. The Electoral Commission has a projected deficit for the past few years; and its President has raised some flags at a hearing this week[4]. Again, you must devote some time see that they put their act to do their job.

The Discussion Draft does not mention FEMA and CDBG-DR extraordinary funds awarded as consequence of Hurricane María. It doesn't state what is going to happens to the undisbursed funds on the Independence options; nor what going to happen on Statehood. I think you should look for that.

On Statehood there is no adjustment or retroactive benefit of SSI for the people who do not receive the benefits but meet the requirements, claimed for many years. Same thing happens with the pension of the Veterans that were calculated based on a non-continental resident, and that has to be taken for.

There is no phase-in of the federal tax liability. The Draft propose some incentives for Independence, including extra funds on a huge amount as a block grant, but there is no proposition of incentives for the people of Puerto Rico, if we become -as I expect- a State. Also, the Draft does not mention the seed money to promote economic development using zones or something like that.

And, in a personal basis becoming a State is important because I have a grandson living in the Florida Panhandle. His father is a 6-times Afghanistan active-duty veteran and

needs some special health treatment and health services that the Puerto Rico veteran hospital doesn't provides, since only states have such specialized healthcare facilities.

Respectfully submitted,  
###

[Signed]  
Jorge E Aponte

Guaynabo, Puerto Rico  
June 9, 2022

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[1] This is a link to my LinkedIn profile: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/joaponte/>

[2] File G:\CMTE\NR\17\LMD\LMS\_098.XML, or  
g:\VHLD\051922\D051922.035.xml (836185 | 13) May 19, 2022 (11:07 a.m.)

[3] House Committee on Natural Resources Chair Raúl M. Grijalva will held a public input forum on the Puerto Rico Status Act discussion draft to seek input from members of the public on Saturday, June 4 from 3 to 8:30 PM Eastern at the Puerto Rico Convention Center in San Juan.

[4] Complicado aprobar enmiendas al Código Electoral en esta sesión legislativa - El Nuevo Día ([elnuevodia.com](http://elnuevodia.com)) and La CEE advierte que no tiene presupuesto para ejecutar cambios electorales de impacto fiscal | Legislatura | [elvocero.com](http://elvocero.com)

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**Emil Nieves**

Saludos.

Agradeceré que ignoren los primeros comentarios que envié. Le hice unas correcciones para mejorar la lectura.

Los vuelvo a incluir:  
Comentarios sobre el anteproyecto de ley "Puerto Rico Status Act"  
"SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS"

## Electores elegibles (pág 3)

La definición establece que sólo los residentes bona fide de PR que cualifiquen para votar en las elecciones generales podrán votar para elegir una de las alternativas de estatus. Sin embargo, al hacerlo incluiría electores residentes no ciudadanos y ciudadanos naturalizados. Esto permitiría la participación de “no puertorriqueños” en un proceso político de autodeterminación que debería estar reservado a los nacidos en PR y a la primera generación de descendientes de estos que residan o no residen en la isla.

Considero que la definición de electores elegibles tiene que ser discutida y debatida ampliamente antes que se apruebe un proyecto de ley que cambie el actual estatus de Puerto Rico. Después de todo, la participación en este tipo de proceso electoral no es para elegir la administración colonial de turno.

### “SEC. 5. PLEBISCITE”

#### (3) SOVEREIGNTY IN FREE ASSOCIATION WITH THE UNITED STATES

(D) “Birth in Puerto Rico shall cease to be a basis for United States.....citizens shall be eligible to acquire United States citizenship for the duration of the first.....Association.” (pág 7)

No es lo mismo decir “citizens shall be eligible to acquire United States citizenship” que “citizens shall acquire United States citizenship”. La frase “be eligible to” debe ser eliminada de forma tal que quede claro que bajo el estatus político de Libre Asociación, la ciudadanía estadounidense de los que nazcan en PR es estrictamente ius sanguinis. Esto sería más fácil de explicar a la población en general y a los electores en particular, ya que no sería la primera vez que la ciudadanía estadounidense adviene a los puertorriqueños de esta forma. Bajo la Ley Jones de 1917 se impuso la naturalización colectiva a todos los residentes nacidos en PR, convirtiéndolos por primera vez en ciudadanos estadounidenses. Sin embargo, la ciudadanía de los futuros hijos de estos ciudadanos sólo se adquiriría cuando ambos padres eran ciudadanos estadounidenses, ciudadanía ius sanguinis. Es la Nationality Act of 1940 la que establece que nacer en Puerto Rico equivale a nacer en Estados Unidos, estableciendo así la ciudadanía jus soli.

(E) “Puerto Rico enters into Articles of Free Association with the United States.....which shall be terminable at will by either the United States or Puerto Rico at any time.”

La frase “terminable at will by either the United States or Puerto Rico at any time” requiere aclaración y definición. La frase tal y como está expresada traerá incertidumbre y dudas entre los electores que pueden simpatizar por la Libre Asociación y la igualarán a la independencia plena. La misma da margen a que los electores crean que cualquier

acto caprichoso de ambas partes podría darle final al pacto de asociación. Sugiero que la frase se modifique en una de las siguientes formas:

1. Se puede señalar en el texto de la ley que durante el periodo de vigencia del primer pacto de asociación el mismo "will not be terminable at will at any time by either the United States or Puerto Rico". En su lugar, se debe señalar que será durante las negociaciones del segundo pacto de asociación cuando se definan las condiciones y circunstancias bajo las cuales el pacto dejará de existir.

2. También se puede en este mismo anteproyecto de ley definir las condiciones y circunstancias bajo las cuales el pacto dejaría de existir antes de su vencimiento.

#### SEC. 6. NONPARTISAN VOTER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

##### (b) VOTER EDUCATION MATERIALS (pág 10)

Esta sección no está clara.

#### SEC. 109. CITIZENSHIP; IMMIGRATION

##### (2) CHILDREN BORN AFTER INDEPENDENCE (pág 23)

Esta sección no está clara.

#### SEC. 110 & 212. INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS TO ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND GRANTS

##### (b) SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM (pág. 25 & 39)

".....upon the proclamation of independence, are residents of the nation of Puerto Rico and are not yet eligible for old age, disability, or survivors' insurance benefits under the system, shall be transferred to the Government of the nation of Puerto Rico....."

Esto debe ser modificado para no afectar los derechos de las personas que cotizan actualmente o que estarán cotizando al Sistema de Seguro Social de EEUU al momento de declararse la independencia. Estas personas deben de tener igual derecho, si así lo desean, de continuar aportando a dicho sistema o de transferir sus aportaciones al sistema de seguridad social bajo la república. De esta forma, las únicas personas que no entrarían a cotizar el sistema de EEUU son aquellas que entren al mercado laboral por primera vez luego de declararse la independencia. Los cambios a la cotización del Seguro Social de EEUU deben ser prospectivos.

##### (c) OTHER FEDERAL TRANSFER PAYMENTS (pág 26)

##### (2) ANNUAL AGGREGATE FUNDING

##### (3) DECREASE IN AMOUNT

Estas secciones proveen para que el nivel de transferencias federales se mantenga por un espacio de 10 años (a partir del cual decrece) a un nivel equivalente a la totalidad de los fondos transferidos al momento de declararse la independencia.

Dado el tiempo que requerirá desarrollar el nivel de comercio exterior y las relaciones bilaterales con otros países, será necesario un periodo más extenso para alcanzar el flujo



de fondos que actualmente provienen del Gobierno Federal. Entiendo que el periodo de 10 años es muy corto. Este periodo debe ser más extenso o tiempo en que estarán decreciendo las transferencias más prolongado. ¿Cuánto? Sugiero que la Oficina de Presupuesto del Congreso modele los posibles escenarios.

#### TITLE III – TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION – STATEHOOD

##### (1) PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION; DATE OF ADMISSION. (pág 41)

En esta sección se establece una transición de un año para la estadidad. Esto no es realista. Las complejidades en los cambios en las leyes de Puerto Rico requerirán más tiempo. Además, crea un desbalance a favor de esta opción de estatus, ya que el tiempo para salir del actual estatus colonial es más corto. El campo de juego para todas las opciones debe estar nivelado.

Entiendo que de ganar esta opción, se debe establecer un proceso con un tiempo fijo el cual en primer lugar ordenaría crear una comisión conjunta entre el Gobierno de Puerto Rico y el Gobierno Federal donde se establezca con claridad cuáles son las leyes que requerirán cambios, la forma que estas deben cambiar y cuándo deben comenzar a regir. En segundo lugar, se debe someter a la aprobación del Congreso y luego de los electores de Puerto Rico. Si los electores lo aprueban, entonces se comenzaría un proceso de incorporación completa a EEUU.

#### SEC. 306. CONTINUITY OF LAWS, GOVERNMENT, AND OBLIGATIONS (pág 47/48)

##### (3) CONTINUITY OF OBLIGATIONS

“All contracts, obligations, liabilities, debts, and claims of the territory of Puerto Rico and its instrumentalities at the moment of admission shall continue in full force....”

Excepto por lo que se menciona en la Sección 306, el anteproyecto de ley no trata el nivel de deuda pública que tiene la isla. Considero que no importa el cambio de estatus que finalmente prevalezca, el nivel de deuda pública existente no será cónsono con el desarrollo económico futuro de Puerto Rico. Debido a que el mismo se adquirió bajo las leyes de EEUU y su pago actual es una imposición de la Junta de Control Fiscal creada por el Congreso sin el aval de los puertorriqueños, no le corresponde a Puerto Rico pagarlo. EEUU debe asumir dicha deuda para que las posibilidades de éxito económico sean mayores bajo cualquier estatus.

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**Luis Trinidad**

Indeed the independence for Puerto Rico is a superb business for the USA.

Is a simple thing! Math! Pure Math. More than 30 states would have less power than Puerto Rico! Is never going to happen.

“And here is where the STATEHOOD BACKERS ARE ARROGANT. While they rightly insist that Puerto Rico not be give up its unique identity, they are demanding that the United States give up its unique identity – and become a bilingual and bicultural nation. THE ANSWER MUST BE NO. FOR THAT WOULD BE SUIGIDAL”. Pat Buchanan

“Let Puerto Rico remain Puerto Rico, and let the United States remain the United States and not try to absorb, assimilate and Americanize a people whose hearts will forever belong to that island”. Pat Buchanan

“What would statehood mean? Since the island has a per-capita income one-half of Mississippi’s, its unemployment is three times the U.S. level, and half its people qualify for welfare, statehood means a mammoth new unfunded liability”. Pat Buchanan

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### **Ronald Porrata**

It is about time US citizens residing in Puerto Rico are allowed to vote for the US President and their own US representatives and US senators. Granting PR Statehood with cure this most undemocratic status.

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### **Jorge Mejias**

As a born and raised American from Puerto Rico, it’s been difficult to understand why to live in the island diminishes rights as american. We want equality. Nothing different from what fellow Americans from other states.

Our current territorial status doesn’t uphold a democratic analysis. Congress is way pass the time to act and provide an opportunity for the Americans living in the island to decide from none territorial options, what should be our fate. I sincerely thanks the Members of Congress for taking the time, but please follow with an approval of the bill.

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## **Christopher Lanski**

Please remove the second option. This will keep it easier for the population, their discussions, and decreases similar confusion that may have occurred with earlier votes. Make it (1) Independent country of Puerto Rico, and (2) U.S. State of Puerto Rico.

In addition, to make it definitive and demonstrate greater support for either option, consider the requirement of a 60% (three-fifths) majority for either of the two options in order to take effect.

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## **Richard Allen**

I live in Puerto Rico full time for past twenty years. There is no doubt that people living here do not want statehood.

Everybody I talk to now does not want the irreversible status of statehood.

The independence movement has grown, though it still remains less popular than continuing association with USA.

Puerto Rican attitudes on the island are much different than thinking on mainland USA.

Forcing or promoting statehood is not accepted well here.

I recommend you send people to take the pulse of the island. Ask people if they want statehood. Few do.

This is not Hawaii, so Congressional push to force statehood will not work in PR. There is way too much opposition.

Congress needs to legislate better rights and conditions for Puerto Rico, not statehood.

Not to do so (like removing the hated Jones Act) will result in stronger numbers of people opposing US rule.

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## **Jose Deliz**

Eliminate references to the language in this bill. It falls under the 10th amendment of our Constitution.

The Route map is clearly defined in the draft project. It does NOT require many amendments.

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## **Albert Garnica**

Election results of any kind are still merited on the mainland regardless of low voter turnout. Meanwhile, Puerto Rico has voted on 3 different instances to gain admission as a state. The most recent referendum was held in 2020 with 1 specific question, rather than adding confusion in language via alternate choices. Unfortunately, those results were ignored by congress. As an American Citizen of non-puerto rican decent, my heart aches for this territory full of individuals who are treated as 2nd class citizens. Rather than respecting the results since the last 3 times this topic was placed before them, I can acknowledge how drafting a new bill with convoluted text would further demoralize & disenfranchise these voters yet again. An inadvertent side-effect would be further apathy and general thinking of "what's the point?" Prior to 1959, the majority of the Hawaiian people did not want to become a state, yet it did join the union. In contrast, Puerto Ricans have consistently voiced their yearning to be part of the US through the legal means at their disposal, yet no action has been taken. Please remedy this, we support any bill to immediately admit the 51st State.

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## **Timothy Bill**

Dear Committee Members,

I am strongly in favor of this legislation and this approach for handling the decolonization of Puerto Rico. I have been passionate about giving Puerto Ricans the option to choose their own path forward and this bill as drafted would do so without the unconstitutional options included in some past non-bonding votes held on the island. I am also strongly in favor of this legislation creating binding outcomes based on the status vote. This issue has been holding Puerto Rico back for long enough. It's time to settle this in a just and democratic way. I believe this legislation would accomplish that goals.

Sincerely,  
Timothy Bill  
Illinois

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## **Katharine Bierce**

I support Puerto Rico becoming a state.

Puerto Rican people do not want to be a colony, and America should not be a colonialist power.

The benefits are numerous:

1. The sometimes bizarre legal inequalities between Puerto Rico and the states would end, immediately helping Puerto Rico's economy. For example, Puerto Rico would be eligible for D-SNAP, the special food stamp program for disaster victims. No one can explain why Puerto Rico isn't eligible for the program now, but this situation would end if Puerto Rico were a state. The same holds true for the inequities in Medicaid, family tax credits, and many more federal programs.
2. Like every territory which has become a state, Puerto Rico would be in a stronger economic position. Jobs for local people will come naturally as Puerto Rico rebuilds. Being part of the larger U.S. economy will increase tourism, entrepreneurship, and investment in business in Puerto Rico. Instead of having to rely on self-destructive tax loopholes, Puerto Rico will have the same opportunities for growth the other states have.
3. Puerto Rico will have full representation in the U.S. legislature, with the ability to vote on laws that affect Puerto Rico.
4. Residents of Puerto Rico will be able to vote in presidential elections, as well as in elections for senators and congresspeople. Full participation in the democratic process will be available to all residents of Puerto Rico.
5. With increased power and prosperity, Puerto Rico will bring greater benefits to the United States as a whole, as every territory has done when it has become a state.

Thank you!

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## **Noel Fuentes**

It's incredible! When congress makes all these decisions because it's with congress who decides, it has decided to let the island take a vote on what they want how about keeping it's always been but no, you let them decide did the British let it's finer colonies decide after ww 2 hell they cut them loose why won't congress return P.R. back to spain they took her from her mother you are not their mother but that would be admitting you were wrong in starting a war spain has 14th best economy in the let them have their

identity with Spain they will grow.

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### **Conchy Perez**

After 35 plus years living in the states, statehood is not the answer to all of our problems. I hear all of you talking but only few have ever lived in the states. We will be exposed to losing our culture, tourism, island identity and representation around the world and much more. My calling to you is to spend all of your energy in bringing back companies to PR so our poverty levels will decrease, household income will increase and incentivize our future generation of professionals to stay. Carlos Romero Barcelo once said "la estadidad es para los pobres" as he was right. Look at where we are (read the 2020 Census) today, financially dependent on the US as he always wanted and JGonzalez continues his legacy however those moneys hardly makes it to the needy. The people have been blindfolded, statehood is not the alternative. We are honest people, who deserve the truth of what statehood is and how will affect you as an individual and to our ISLA DEL ENCANTO.

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### **Jose Bird**

Statehood for Puerto Rico aligns with our Great Nation's democracy postulates. The People have spoken and demand statehood. All of the recent vote events on the subject have had the same result: a majority for statehood. Only a meager minority is pulling for independence. Statehood is what is right. Colonialism is just wrong and we have repeatedly rejected it. The People have spoken. Congress must act.

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### **Jason Ortiz**

This suggests a poll that asks people what they agree with. The language can easily be interpreted to be asking people what the current status of Puerto Rico is, not what they want to be the future status. Many people think that Puerto Rico is a Freely Associated State, as in Spanish, the term "Estado Libre Asociado" translates to "Freely Associated State". This tactic was to give Puerto Rico its current status. They were tricked into

voting for the current status.

As a result of a misleading ballot, the ballot shall make clear, "Please choose the future you desire for Puerto Rico, you may only choose 1". It should NOT ask "which do you agree with". AGAIN, with that language, people are being asked to vote on what their reality currently is, and NOT the future.

This is a power grab by the PPD, AOC, Raul Grijalva and Nydia Velasquez. This ballot is designed to botch statehood and get a result in favor of free association.

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