



The Honorable Raúl Grijalva
Chairman, House Committee on Natural
Resources

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

Dear Chairman Grijalva, Ranking Member Westerman:

In the last couple of years media have made well known the situation of the island of Puerto Rico and its relationship with the United States. Puerto Rico was acquired from the Kingdom of Spain after the United States won the Spanish-American War in 1898. Since then, it's been treated as a possession with no intentions from the three branches of government to giving statehood to the island. In 1898, U.S. Army General Nelson Miles entered to the southern part of the island promising all Puerto Ricans not only to liberate them from Spanish tyranny, but also to give them the freedom from which the United States once were founded. A hundred and twenty-three years later Puerto Ricans, American Citizens from the island, are still waiting for that promise to be fulfilled.

Today President Joe Biden and the Democratic Party are defending minority values. Their campaign was all about Black Lives Matters, minorities rights, anti-nationalism and

fascism and the situation of Puerto Rico is not different for what Americans are living in the mainland. The federal government systematically discriminate against American Citizens, not only on the island, but in all the five populated territories. As other fellow statehood supporters from the island and the mainland, we don't want to talk more about the referendum results were statehood won by a significant majority, but for what we want to underline is about credibility and the future of the Democratic Party itself.

In half of the 20th Century, the United States used Puerto Rico as a democracy showcase to Latin America and the Soviet world to demonstrate that American values, American living and dreams were the right direction for the world. We were on that road and we still believe in those values. Let's take the sword as once the young American Republic started to lead the free world, as General Nelson Miles once did to overcome tyranny in this strange times we are living and make example of how democracy works in times were the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation and other autocratic states are taking advantage of that world that we once knew.

s/y

Hon. Keren Riquelme Cabrera

Senator at Large

Puerto Rico