

**UNITED STATES-PUERTO RICO POLITICAL STATUS  
ACT**

---

---

**FIELD HEARING**  
BEFORE THE  
**COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

**H.R. 856—United States-Puerto Rico's Political Status Act**

MAYAGUEZ, PUERTO RICO, APRIL 21, 1997

**Serial No. 105-27**

Printed for the use of the Committee on Resources



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

43-229 \*

WASHINGTON : 1997



**City of Bayamon**  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

P.O. BOX 1588  
BAYAMON, P.R. 00960  
TEL. (809) 787-8838

April 4, 1997

Hon. Don Young  
United States House Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Honorable Young:

On July 25, 1998 we will observe the centennial of United States sovereignty of Puerto Rico. This change of sovereignty came with the landing of troops in 1898 and it was declared by the Commander of the U.S. Army, Major General Nelson A. Miles, who issued a general proclamation addressed "To the Inhabitants of Puerto Rico" which said in part:

"In the prosecution of the war against the Kingdom of Spain by the people of the United States in the cause of liberty, justice, and humanity, its military forces have come to occupy the island of Puerto Rico...They bring you the fostering arm of a nation of free people, whose greatest power is in justice and humanity to all those living within its fold".

After almost a century we are about to make the proclamation of General Miles come true. The 3.8 million Puerto Ricans on the island have been United States citizens since Congress conferred citizenship in 1917, but this has been a second class citizenship. Puerto Ricans have shed their blood in the defense of this Nation in numbers greater than half of the States but we have denied the right to vote for our Commander-in-Chief. As a Territory of the United States we Puerto Ricans are denied our full rights of Citizenship: the presidential vote, and equal representation in Congress. The relationship is tantamount to colonialism and denies us justice as well as our humanity.

You have it in your power to finally bring justice and humanity to Puerto Rico. "The United States-Puerto Rico Status Act", H.R. 856, is the measure that will start this process.

**☞ PUERTO RICO'S MOST PROGRESSIVE CITY**

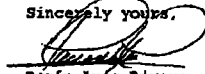
April 4, 1997  
page 2

I praise the support of the cosponsors who have recognized responsibility that this intrinsic to the authority over the territories vested in Congress by Article IV, Section 3, Paragraph 2 of the Constitution which reads: "The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States..." We can no longer be denied justice and humanity.

I respectfully request that you add your support to this measure to provide a process which leads to the full self-government for Puerto Rico. Let Congress and Puerto Ricans formally acknowledge what has been a fact for a century and let us stand together on the fourth of July to celebrate the admission of the Fifty-first State.

Looking forward to your support I remain,

Sincerely yours,



Ramón Luis Rivera  
Mayor