

was going to be a democratically controlled state. And guess what? They are Republicans.

The same situation happened also with the State of Hawaii. The fear was that Hawaii was going to be Republican, and guess what? They are all Democrats.

So to me, that seems to be the problem that we have here in the Congress, looking at it as a political issue, and not looking at the rightness of what should be done to meet the best course of action for the people of Puerto Rico and their future.

I am sorry, my time is up. I didn't even have a chance to ask questions, but I will hopefully wait for the second round. Thank you, Madame Chair.

Ms. CHRISTENSEN. Thanks, and we will have a second round. I now recognize our Ranking Member on the full committee, Mr. Young, for any questions.

Mr. YOUNG. Thank you, Madame Chairman. I will say that my good friend from American Samoa put it very well. This is a political issue.

But I have one, other than Hawaii, one of the most recent territories that became a state. And I can say this is my interest in this. I make no apologies. I am a statehood person. Because I knew where we were as a territory, and what we could not do, and how we were being treated as a colony.

It was a big fight in the State of Alaska. And we petitioned the Congress, and the Congress responded, and we became a state in 1959.

And in retrospect, if we knew we had as much oil as we had—
[Laughter.]

Mr. YOUNG.—we would have probably become a nation, and I would have become Emperor. But I don't think you would let us do it right now.

But my goal here is to really try to allow Puerto Rico to advance. And I do not believe you can advance as a commonwealth. I say that from my heart. Because we were not able to advance as a commonwealth. We were a territory. And my goal is to listen to the Puerto Rican people, listen to witnesses like we have today. But my ultimate goal is to try to give the Puerto Rican people a choice. And my bill, H.R. 900, does give them a choice.

And if they decide to be an independent nation, God bless you. If you decide to be a state, God bless you. If you decide to be a commonwealth, you are not going to grow. And I am not going to ask God to bless you in that case.

[Laughter.]

Mr. YOUNG. I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you. Before I move to Ms. Bordallo, I also have to ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Dent, be allowed to sit on the dais and participate in the hearing. And hearing no objection, so ordered.

I now recognize my colleague from Guam, the Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo, for such questions as she might have.

Ms. BORDALLO. Thank you very much, Madame Chairman, and Ranking Member Fortuño, and of course our distinguished Mr. Young who just left the room, and Mr. Rahall, who was here earlier, and to all of the distinguished witnesses.