

Proclamation

WHEREAS, the Treaty of Paris was signed by the United States on December 10, 1898, and was ratified on February 6, 1899, formally concluding the Spanish-American War and establishing Puerto Rico as a territory of the United States; and

WHEREAS, on March 2, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Puerto Rican Federal Relations Act, popularly known as the Jones Act, which extended United States citizenship to the residents of Puerto Rico but did not provide them with voting representation in the United States Congress nor give them the right to vote for the President of the United States; and

WHEREAS, since 1917, more than two hundred thousand United States citizens from Puerto Rico have served valiantly in every war and armed conflict in which our nation has fought in defense of American democratic principles and self-determination, and more than 2,000 Puerto Ricans have made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our Nation, including 14 who have died in the war in Iraq, and four heroic Puerto Ricans have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for their extraordinary valor in battle; and

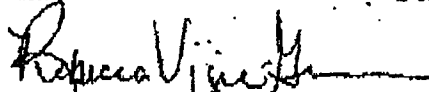
WHEREAS, the territory of New Mexico was also acquired by the United States as a result of armed conflict, and New Mexicans endured eighty-four years as a territory before realizing their aspirations for permanent political status; and New Mexico's great history, including its ascension to statehood, is intertwined with our state's Hispanic heritage; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, the legislature of Puerto Rico formally petitioned the United States Congress to respond to the democratic aspirations of the United States citizens of Puerto Rico by means of a federally sanctioned plebiscite to be held no later than 1998, and Congress has not yet responded to this petition; and the time has come, after 106 years as a territory, for Puerto Rico to exercise its right to self-determination regarding its desire to attain full self-government within the context of a congressionally authorized plebiscite; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico Senate and the House of Representatives adopted a joint memorial to the President and Congress of the United States on February 19, 2004, requesting that legislation be enacted that would respond to the aspirations of the U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico for a permanent status that would provide full representative democracy; and

NOW, THEREFORE I, Bill Richardson, Governor of the State of New Mexico, by virtue of the authority vested in the Governor, do hereby proclaim that the Government of New Mexico fully supports the call of the U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico for federal legislation that will define the non-territorial status options available to them, authorize a referendum in Puerto Rico that will enable them to decide on a permanent status, and assure that their status decision will be implemented by the federal government. FURTHERMORE, I join the Legislature of New Mexico in requesting the New Mexico congressional delegation to actively promote and support timely action by the President and Congress of the United States on this important national issue.

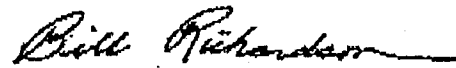
Attest:



Rebecca Vigil-Giron
Secretary of State

Done at the Executive Office this
1st day of March, 2004.

Witness my hand and the Great Seal of
the Great State of New Mexico



Bill Richardson
Governor

