

American G.I. Forum

**AMERICAN GI FORUM OF THE UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL COMMANDER**
A NATIONAL VETERANS FAMILY ORGANIZATION SINCE 1948

109 NORTH 122nd Street • SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98153
(206) 364-5948 • Fax: (206) 361-1341 • E-Mail agifoc@aol.com

Francisco F. Ivarra Dr. Hector P. Garcia
National Commander Founder

WHEREAS, United States citizenship was extended to residents of Puerto Rico in 1917; and

WHEREAS, since 1917 some 200,000 Puerto Rican veterans have proudly served in the United States military under a Commander and Chief for whom they could not vote and authorized by a Congress in which they have no voting representation; and

WHEREAS, Puerto Ricans have contributed to our nation's defense in disproportionate numbers and include four Medal of Honor recipients; and have earned the right to decide if they wish to become full partners in our democracy; and

WHEREAS, the time has come for Puerto Rico to have the opportunity to express itself regarding its desire to attain full self-government within the context of a congressionally authorized plebiscite; and

WHEREAS, the American Veterans' Committee for Puerto Rico Self-Determination is an independent, non-partisan coalition of concerned veterans organizations and individuals working to mobilize other veterans to educate the American public on the need to resolve Puerto Rico's status dilemma; and

WHEREAS, the American GI Forum of the United States is a Hispanic veterans family organization that includes many Puerto Rico veterans and their families, and whose motto is "education is our freedom and freedom should be everybody's business;" and

WHEREAS, self-determination, and ultimately freedom for the nearly four million American citizens of Puerto Rico to choose their future political status, is an issue about which there is insufficient education on the mainland, and the civil rights of these Hispanics is a matter for which we should stand with our fellow veterans;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE AMERICAN GI FORUM OF THE UNITED STATES: That the American GI Forum of the United States supports the American Veterans' Committee for Puerto Rico Self-Determination in its efforts toward enactment of federal legislation that would define the political status options available and provide for a plebiscite that would allow the United States citizens of Puerto Rico to make an informed decision regarding a permanent status for the island.

Given this 11th day of August in the year 2000 in Denver, Colorado.