

October 29, 1997

Mr. Jim Nicholson, Chairman
Republican National Committee
310 First Street SE
Washington, D.C. 20003

Dear Chairman Nicholson:

We want to express our support of HR 350, officially known as United States-Puerto Rico Political Status Act. This measure sponsored by Senator Gonzalez, Mr. De Loey, Chairman Young, and various other members of the House Republican Leadership, was reported favorably by the Committee on Resources by a 44 to 1 vote on May 21 of this year. It provides the people of Puerto Rico with the first opportunity for the self-determination as Congress in the exercise of its plenary powers over any territorial possession will provide Puerto Ricans with the same opportunities that are available and in full compliance with our Constitution.

Only a solution to this political dilemma will allow Puerto Ricans to effectively bridge the gap with the rest of our Nation. For so many years these fellow citizens have suffered the absence of adequate means to truly address the socio-economic needs of their population and to ensure their equal share of responsibilities. A continuation of the status quo would entail a waste of billions of dollars per year, without the opportunity, dignity, and self-sufficiency possible under any alternative that provides for full self-government.

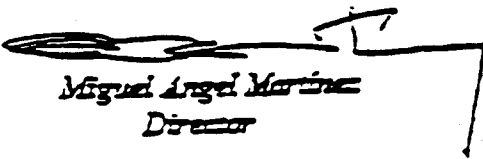
Next year, the nearly 4 million U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico will celebrate 100 years under our flag. Still, those same citizens, thousands of them brave veterans of our Armed Forces in every conflict since World War I, are still deprived of their equal rights under the same national laws condition irrespective of the significant degree of local self-government that they enjoy. There is no room or justification in American society for the invidious discrimination of the citizens of U.S. territory. This is another reason why this measure provides Puerto Ricans with the same opportunities that allow for the exercise of full self-government and in the case of emergency, for the full enjoyment of U.S. citizens. Besides, it is in compliance with the objectives set forth by our 1996 Republican Platform, and by every platform since 1947.

Puerto Rico is the only true Hispanic territory of the United States, and as so represents an important part of the history of the creation of our nation. California, New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana, Florida are part of the same history that millions of its citizens cherish and want to preserve. They have contributed to the diversity that makes our nation the greatest of the world. Puerto Ricans desire to be recognized as full citizens of the United States represents the desire of all Hispanic population to be recognized as an important part in the development of our country. Puerto Ricans right for self determination represents the aspiration of all our community to be respected as an equal to the rest of the nation. Delaying the consideration of the Young Bill will send wrong and harmful message to all Hispanics in the United States from the Republican Party. Our party is beginning to recognize the importance of the Hispanic vote all around the nation and that's why the Puerto Rican issue is the best opportunity to demonstrate that new beginning.

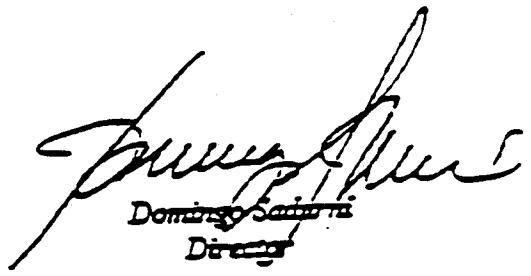
For all the reasons stated above, We strongly urge the Republican Party to support this legislation.

Sincerely yours,

THE CUBAN AMERICAN NATIONAL FOUNDATION
Puerto Rican Chapter



Miguel Angel Martínez
Director



Domingo Sainza
Director