

The Americas Foundation

A Resolution in Support of the Enactment of Federal Legislation Providing for a Congressional Mandated Process Leading Toward Self-Determination for Puerto Rico

WHEREAS *The Americas Foundation's* mission is to: 1. *Create New Opportunities: The Foundation works to build educational and economic empowerment opportunities for Hispanic Americans at all socio-economic levels.* 2. *Break Barriers: The Foundation works to break existing barriers and glass ceilings for qualified professional Hispanic Americans.* 3. *Build Bridges: The Foundation works to build trade and business opportunities between the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean nations.*

WHEREAS, we recognize that since 1898 Puerto Rico has remained a colony of the United States, with control over its local government, however, with no participation at the federal level.

WHEREAS, The Jones Act of 1917 granted the people of Puerto Rico United States Citizenship.

WHEREAS, we recognize the many social, economical, and political contributions the 3.8 million Hispanic U.S. citizens residents of Puerto Rico make to the conservation of this Nation's democratic values.

WHEREAS, 1998 will mark the one hundredth anniversary of the annexation of Puerto Rico to the United States

WHEREAS, in January 23, 1997, the Legislature of Puerto Rico adopted Concurrent Resolution 2 requesting "...the One Hundred and Fifty (United States) Congress and the President of the United States of America to respond to the democratic aspirations of the American citizens of Puerto Rico, in order to achieve a process that guarantees the prompt decolonization of Puerto Rico by means of a plebiscite sponsored by the Federal Government, which must be held no later than 1998.

WHEREAS, as a direct response to the request made by the Puerto Rico Legislature, two bills were presented in the First Session of the 105th Congress: H.R. 856, entitled the "United States-Puerto Rico Political Status Act" and S. 472, entitled the "Puerto Rico Self-Determination Act." The underlying fundamental principle found in each of these two bills is the right of 3.8 million Hispanic U.S. citizens to self-determination.

WHEREAS, we recognize the importance this Nation's cultural and linguistic diversity has upon its standing as a world power leader.

THEREFORE, we support the nurturing and preservation of all the characteristics which define the different cultural communities of our Nation, and condemn any attempts to eradicate the richness of diversity.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that all members of *The Americas Foundation* across this Nation urge all members of the United States House of Representatives and Senate to support H.R. 856, "United States-Puerto Rico Political Status Act" and S. 472, "Puerto Rico Self-Determination Act," respectively, which provide for a process leading towards self-determination for 3.8 million Hispanic U.S. citizens residing in Puerto Rico.

Victor Pinzon

VICTOR PINZON

Chairman and President, *The Americas Foundation*

Washington, D.C. on this day of November 19, 1997