

From: Anthony Suarez Esq

President of Suarez law Group and The Legal services Clinic of the Puerto Rican Community Inc.

Statement to United States Senate July 29<sup>th</sup> 2021

Dear Sirs:

I am Anthony Suarez currently President of Suarez Law Group and of the Legal services clinic of the Puerto Rican Community Inc a Florida non for profit law firm.

I am an American Citizen of Puerto Rican descent whose Grandfather migrated to New York in 1920. However I have always maintained a great interest in the island and my cultural heritage. In that capacity I gained election as President of the Puerto Rican Bar Association of NY in 1988 and of the Puerto Rican Bar Association of Florida, thirty years later. As far as I know, being the only person to have achieved that task. In 1999, I was elected to the Florida House of Representatives, at that time, the only representative of Puerto Rican descent in the state. I served with Sen Marco Rubio who then was just entering the Florida house.

I have traveled extensively on the island and was invited as a speaker to the COLEGIO DE ABOGADOS de Puerto Rico at a Forum to speak to members of their bar, as well as to the Attorney General and members of the Puerto Rican Supreme court on issues affecting the Puerto Rican "diaspora."

The reputation of the Puerto Rican Government over the years has been tarnished greatly. This affects not only Puerto Ricans on the island but those of us who cherish Puerto Rico and its relationship to the United States body Politic. Perception is everything and transparency of the process is not only urgent it is irreplaceable.

This bill will be reported widely on the island and around the nation. It will enhance the concept that the Governmental process is open and accessible. As an American who served our nation, in the US Army (1970-88), retiring as a captain of Military Intelligence and as a Florida state Representative I know what governmental credibility means to our nation. Today this concept is in need or dire attention. This bill will aide in that process.

On my weekly radio show "I need to know" broadcast in central Florida, the topic of Puerto Rico's governance is always a topic of interest and hot debate. This will continue until the Island and the US Congress finally determine its ultimate fate. However at the root cause of the controversy is trust in decisions made by leaders. Nothing more sacred can exist than its citizens believing in the fairness of their representatives. Too much cynicism is prevalent and this bill works precisely on that issue.

I urge the Congress to pass this bill to insure transparency and trust.