

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2010

SUPPORT THE PUERTO RICO DEMOCRACY ACT

Dear Colleague,

As members of the Congressional Hispanic Conference, we take great pride in representing the conservative values of millions of Americans of Hispanic origin across the country. We write to urge your support for H.R. 2499, the Puerto Rico Democracy Act.


Puerto Rico has contributed much to the life of this nation in times of peace and war. Residents of Puerto Rico serve as U.S. government officials, ambassadors, federal judges, and military officers. Puerto Rico has long played a significant part in our nation's defense as the island's soldiers have helped spread democracy and our American values abroad.

Although Puerto Rico has been a U.S. territory for well over 100 years, Congress has never asked the American citizens residing in Puerto Rico to express their opinion on the territory's political status. The Puerto Rico Democracy Act would, for the first time, allow the residents of Puerto Rico the opportunity to voice their opinion on the status of island's relationship to the United States through a fair, neutral, and federally-sanctioned plebiscite.

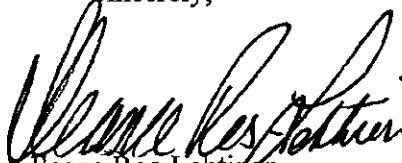
Congress holds a constitutional authority over the territories. It is a power not to be taken lightly, and one that should be used for the betterment of our fellow Americans. We should use this authority to give the residents of Puerto Rico the right to choose their future without taking sides. Importantly, H.R. 2499 imposes no costs on the federal government, and the results of the plebiscite are not binding on Congress. This bill initiates a process that has been endorsed by every Republican President for the past 50 years, and is strongly supported by Puerto Rico's Republican Governor, Republican Senate President and Republican House Speaker. H.R. 2499 has 57 Republican cosponsors, including many key Members of the House Republican Leadership.

I hope you, too, will join us in supporting this worthy and long overdue legislation.

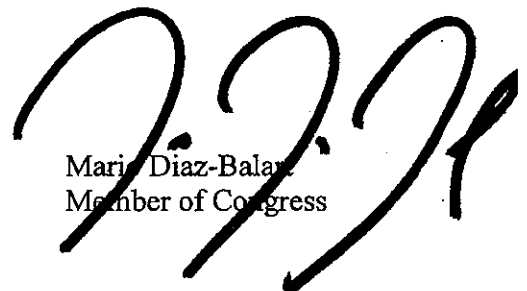
Sincerely,



Lincoln Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress



Ileana Ros-Lentini
Member of Congress



Mari Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress