

LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

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CIA

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE
AND OVERHEAD ARCHITECTURE

September 1, 2016

Name

Address

Address

City, State/Territory, Zip Code

Dear Puerto Rico Fiscal Control Board Appointee:

I write to you as a Puerto Rican born in Chicago with deep and personal ties to the Island and as a person deeply concerned about Puerto Rico's colonial status and the shabby treatment Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans have experienced since becoming a U.S. territory. I am also a Member of Congress who strenuously fought and voted against PROMESA and I represent most of the Puerto Rican community in Chicago. My parents fled Puerto Rico in the 1950s when there was no viable option to stay and support a family, only to repatriate in the late 1960s – with me in tow – to try to make a living and contribute to the Island's prosperity. For me, the birthplace of my father (not to mention my mother and my wife, and the place I plan to retire someday) holds special significance that can scarcely be put into words.

While I have always supported Chapter 9 and debt restructuring relief for Puerto Rico, I do not believe PROMESA was the fair or just solution for what ails Puerto Rico's economy or its people who are forced to flee Puerto Rico at a rate of over 80,000 people per year.

PROMESA provided no relief to the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico for the unequal treatment in healthcare and other government services, no economic development to reverse the crushing unemployment, and no tax reform to attract business and investment. PROMESA also imposed a fiscal control board with the power to circumvent the democratically elected representatives of the Puerto Rican people and to impose whatever austerity measures deemed necessary to pay bond-holders and balance the budget, with absolutely no voice or vote from the Puerto Rican people themselves.

Because of your expertise and background, you have been appointed to this unelected board. You now hold the purse strings and the future of the Puerto Rican people in your hands.

When PROMESA came to the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives for a vote, I introduced several amendments, none of which was even allowed an up or down vote on the House floor. Among my amendments were common sense proposals to ensure the board you now serve on conducts its business in the open, in public, and accessible in the language of the people who will be impacted by the board's work. Votes, minutes, decision-making, and the roster of experts, stakeholders, consultants, and advisors should be made public. While Puerto Ricans had no voice in the existence of the control board, certainly we can give them the dignity of understanding in their own language what the board does and decides.

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This is at the heart of why I am writing to you. I urge you to make a public commitment to the Puerto Rican people that you will conduct your work on the control board transparently and in the mother tongue of the people who will be deeply impacted for years to come by your decisions (or with simultaneous and thorough translation). Puerto Ricans deserve to know what happens in meetings, which stakeholders from the outside have access to its members, and what policies it is imposing on them.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luis V. Gutiérrez", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Luis V. Gutiérrez
Member of Congress