

Hon. Pedro R Pierluisi

COMISIONADO RESIDENTE | DISTRITO DE PUERTO RICO

111th CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

MESSAGE FROM RESIDENT COMMISSIONER PEDRO R. PIERLUISI

Greetings from the federal capital! In Congress, I am working hard to represent you and all of the American citizens in Puerto Rico. Every day I struggle to attain more benefits for our people. The past twelve months have been full of hard work for Puerto Rico. Even before I was sworn in, I began the battle for the inclusion of Puerto Rico in President Obama's economic stimulus plan (ARRA). Puerto Rico was treated fairly and, thus, is receiving an historic influx of federal funding over the next two years. There are many issues that I tackle in Washington, DC which impact life on the island. The federal health reform, education, environmental protection, public safety and status are just some of the issues I have been working on to improve our quality of life in Puerto Rico. The purpose of this publication is to share with you a summary of the challenges and achievements that I have had in Congress for the benefit of our people. I hope it serves to keep you abreast of important developments for Puerto Rico in Washington, DC and to provide you more information on topics of interest to you. All this information is available in more detail on our webpage www.pierluisi.house.gov. I urge you to keep informed about events that concern us in Congress. You can count on my tireless efforts to fight for your priorities and ensure your rights.



Active in Congressional Organizations:

- Democratic Caucus
- Congressional Hispanic Caucus
- Congressional Friends of Spain Caucus
- Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus
- Congressional Caucus on US-Turkey Relations and Turkish Americans
- House Nursing Caucus
- Water Caucus

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

- Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security—Vice-Chairman
- Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law

EDUCATION AND LABOR COMMITTEE

- Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning, and Competitiveness
- Subcommittee on Post-Secondary Education, Continuing Education and Competitiveness

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

- Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans, and Wildlife
- Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands

AUTHORED LEGISLATION

- H.R.2499 - Puerto Rico Democracy Act of 2009
- H.R.2122 - Rum cover over tax bill
- HR1958 - Authorization for decontamination of Culebra
- HR1809 - TRICARE Prime coverage for Puerto Rico Veterans
- HR1502 - Puerto Rico Hospitals Medicare DSH Equity Act of 2009
- HR1501 - Puerto Rico Medicare Reimbursement Equity Act of 2009

CO-SPONSORED LEGISLATION

- 206 pieces of legislation in various subjects including health, safety, education, environmental protection, economy, energy, veterans and many others.

MUNICIPALITIES

- Met with mayors representing over 53 municipalities and consortiums to discuss federal priorities.
- Visited municipalities to inspect pending and ongoing projects dealing with federal funding.
- Sponsored informational activity with Army Corps of Engineers with the participation of representatives from 31 municipalities.
- Submitted requests for federal appropriations that would benefit multiple cities in Puerto Rico.

ARRA: ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT



“As part of the United States, the economy of Puerto Rico is receiving much needed funding to jumpstart job creation and economic activity. Tough economic times call for our Nation, through this stimulus package, to back up its people, improving job opportunities and quality of life.”

PURPOSE

To promote the economy, encourage investment, improve education, create new jobs and retain existing ones, help those affected by the recession, invest in infrastructure, promote energy efficiency and stabilize government finances.

- Over \$6,000 million in federal funding for Puerto Rico in 2 years.
- Greatest influx of federal funding in the history of Puerto Rico.

IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY OF PUERTO RICO

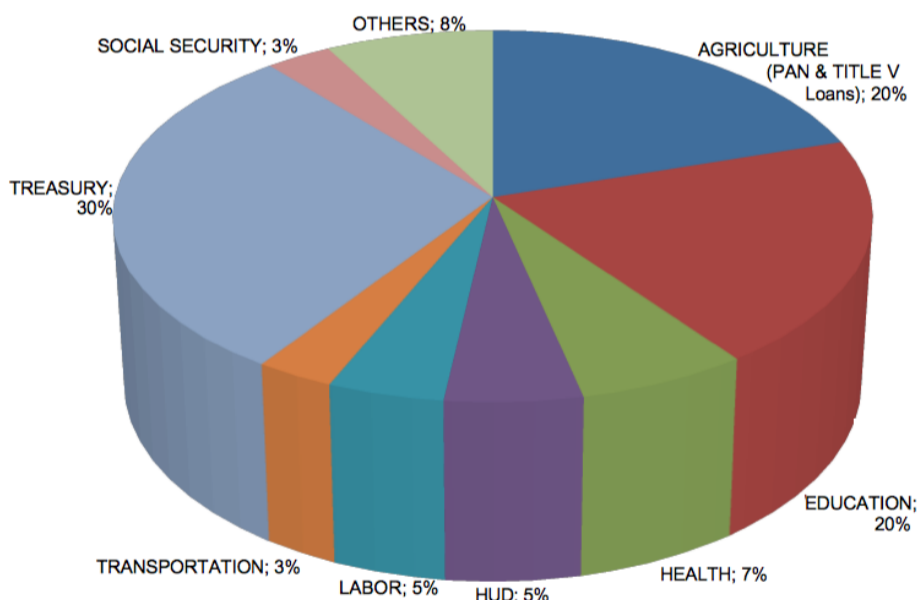
FEBRUARY-JULY:

\$ 539 million = 5.861 jobs

JULY TO DECEMBER:

\$ 1,954 million = 21.239 jobs

From:
recovery.gov
buengobiernopr.com



FUNDS COME FROM

- Additional funding to existing programs (Medicaid, PAN, WIA, Housing, Education, Infrastructure, and others)
- New programs (Energy, Education, and others)
- Competitive Proposals (Justice, Infrastructure, Health, Research, Technology, and others)
- Direct payments to labor force, retirees and veterans

ARRA HIGHLIGHTS THAT AFFECT YOUR POCKET

Make Work Pay

Direct payment of \$ 400 /\$ 800 for working class

WIA Program

Aid and retraining of unemployed

Social Security recipients and disabled veterans

Direct payments of \$ 250

PAN

Increasing funds to beneficiaries

Pell Grants

Increased funds to beneficiaries

Medicaid

30% increase in funds for medical services

Housing

More funds for assistance in obtaining housing



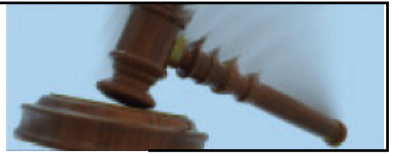
PIERLUISI SHARES HIS AGENDA WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

- Summit of the Americas: Resident Commissioner Pedro Pierluisi, representing Puerto Rico, is part of the Congressional delegation that accompanied President Obama to the 5th Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago where he had the opportunity to discuss his legislative agenda with the President.
- Democratic Caucus: In Virginia, during a seminar of the Caucus, Pierluisi met with President Obama and the Democratic leadership in Congress.

President Barack Obama met with the Resident Commissioner

IMPORTANT LEGISLATION

Resident Commissioner Pedro Pierluisi has supported several projects for the benefit of Puerto Ricans and our fellow citizens in other states and territories.



FOR THE CONSUMER

- Supported the postponement of the upgrade to digital television until June 12 to give people more time to prepare and get their converter boxes.
- Joined congressmen who lobbied for ARRA to include a provision allowing modification of mortgages to help thousands of families in danger of losing their homes.
- Co-sponsored a measure to protect consumers from debt collection practices of excessive interest without notice by the credit card companies which became Law 111-24.

ECONOMY

- Promoted the inclusion of Puerto Rico in the Recovery and Economic Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and worked for its congressional approval achieving an unprecedented economic boost for the island that assures the working class benefits from the federal incentive.
- Filed a bill to promote the original spirit of the reimbursement program of the rum industry which seeks to avoid unfair competition in the industry.
- Co-sponsored measure submitted by Rep. Bill Pascrell to expand the earned income tax credit for the working class in Puerto Rico.



The Resident Commissioner met with students at the Taller de Fotoperiodismo to discuss the importance of education

EDUCATION

- Pierluisi voted in favor of legislation that increases funding for Pell Grants from 2010 through 2019, benefiting more than 289,000 students in Puerto Rico.
- Visited the Secretary of Education Carlos Chardon in his offices to discuss the Department's plans to improve educational services and comply with federal regulations.
- Joined the Mayor of San Juan, Jorge Santini, when visiting the New School of San Juan in support of bilingual educational initiatives in the municipality.
- Co-sponsored Congress's resolution to declare a "National Corps Day" expressing support for Job Corps institutions that provide education and training to thousands of young people.
- Co-sponsored project to improve knowledge of geography in K-12 students through teacher training programs in academic institutions.
- Co-sponsored measure, which was passed overwhelmingly that would mean about \$224 million to promote green schools in Puerto Rico through competitive programs.



The Resident Commissioner met with Governor Luis Fortuño and other Members of Congress who support Puerto Rico in its fight for parity in health funds.

HEALTH

- Filed 2 pieces of legislation seeking equal treatment for Puerto Rico in the Medicare program. The projects seek to match the Medicare reimbursement to hospitals on the island and for Puerto Rico to be included in the subsidy received by hospitals that serve large numbers of indigent medical patients.
- He testified against the Budget Committee of the Federal House of Representatives, demanding fair treatment for the island in Medicare, Medicaid, and other programs.
- Puerto Rico received \$ 31 million for the Ryan White program of health care for HIV / AIDS patients.
- Favored a coalition formed between the Government of Puerto Rico, majority and minority legislators, and 23 health-related organizations created for a combined effort in search of better health benefits for Puerto Rico.
- The Committee on Education and Labor of the Federal House of Representatives unanimously approved an amendment presented by the Resident Commissioner which recognizes the importance of including Puerto Rico in key aspects of the Health Reform President Obama.
- Achieved the Congressional leadership's public support for inclusion of Puerto Rico in federal health reform as well as from the White House expressed by health czar, Nancy DeParle.

VIEQUES AND CULEBRA

- Pierluisi filed legislation to repeal the federal ban on cleaning certain areas of Culebra where there had been military drills, including the northwest peninsula and Flamenco Beach.
- Requested the Subcommittee on Investigations of the Federal House of Representatives to conduct public hearings in Puerto Rico for federal agencies to provide more detailed and definitive conclusions about the effects of military practices in the health of Vieques residents.

EQUAL TREATMENT

- Co-sponsored the Lilly Ledbetter Act, which establishes mechanisms to ensure equal pay for equal work for the benefit of women workers.
- Supported the adoption of the bill to provide the District of Columbia's delegate full voting rights but demands full representation for Puerto Rico. Residents of Washington D.C. vote for the President but their representative has no vote in the House of Representatives.
- Co-sponsored H.R. 1412, creating working groups in the ten judicial districts of the United States to examine the causes of racial and ethnic disparities in the justice system and the Hate Crimes Act to prosecute these crimes.
- Co-sponsored measure to expand the earned income tax credit to encourage work in Puerto Rico, as well as in the nation.

NATURAL RESOURCES, MONUMENTS AND PARKS

- The U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill ordering the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the condition of Fort San Geronimo and the possibility for it to form part of the National Park System.
- Achieved an appropriation of \$ 600,000.00 for the San Juan Bay Estuary to protect and restore the health of estuaries.
- The Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science recommended approval of \$ 100,000.00 for the Institute of Caribbean Coral Reefs.
- ARRA earmarked \$ 1.4 million for improvements to recreational areas and the protection of the Puerto Rican parrot.
- Participated in EPA activity about Hispanic issues with Secretary Jackson and discussed initiatives in Puerto Rico.



Pierluisi visits Veteran's Hospital in San Juan to discuss equality of services in Puerto Rico

VETERANS AND MILITARY SERVICES

- The Resident Commissioner filed legislation that requires the Department of Defense to provide the same health benefits available in all 50 states to the thousands of veterans and their dependents in Puerto Rico and Guam through the TRICARE Prime program.
- The Veterans Hospital in San Juan will receive \$7.8 million for remodeling and repair work.
- Some 50,000 disabled veterans received a stimulus check of \$250.00 through ARRA.
- The Federal House of Representatives approved \$56 million for Puerto Rico, which will benefit our veterans and National Guard members as part of allocations from the Department of Defense and Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2010.
- \$14 million were approved for construction and renovation of facilities in Salinas National Guard and Army Reserve in Caguas.
- Visited the Outpatient Clinic Chalmer's P. Wylie in Columbus, Ohio, which is a new concept of Health Center for veterans. He is proposing the construction of a similar clinic outside the metropolitan area to improve health services in areas far from the Veterans Hospital.
- Convened a meeting with the veteran community to hear their complaints and keep them abreast of his efforts from the Congress.
- Spent time with Puerto Rican soldiers during frequent visits at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, DC.
- Met with Gen. Eric Shinseki, Secretary of the Veterans Administration to discuss the imperative needs of this population in Puerto Rico.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Supported congressional initiative to recruit over 1,500 public safety officers.
- Favored measure to allocate more funds for the Witness Protection Program in jurisdictions with criminal incidence of more than 100 homicides a year.
- Met with U.S. officials from Customs and Border Patrol to discuss the reduction of resources in Puerto Rico allocated by the federal government to combat drug trafficking and illegal immigration.
- Brought together all federal and state agencies of law and order in Puerto Rico to promote coordination between them in the fight against crime and drug trafficking



The Resident Commissioner in Congress during the mark-up hearing of HR 2499

H.R. 2499 PUERTO RICO DEMOCRACY ACT H.R. 2499

Resident Commissioner Pedro R. Pierluisi filed H.R. 2499 on May 19, 2009. The project outlines a referendum process of self determination endorsed by Congress in which the 4 million American citizens of Puerto Rico may express their political status preferences through a direct vote. Voters will decide between the current political status and a different status. If most voters choose to maintain the current status, the bill provides for the people to be consulted again after 8 years. If most voters choose a different status, the bill provides for another process where voters will be consulted again among the three options internationally recognized: independence, sovereignty in association, and statehood.

"The American citizens of Puerto Rico have served in all U.S. conflicts and have given their lives in defense of our democratic values for more than a century but never have been given the opportunity to express their views in relation to its political relationship with the United States in a fair, neutral and democratic process sponsored by Congress. This bill will finally give them that opportunity."

- Pedro Pierluisi.

H.R. 2499 is co-sponsored of 182 lawmakers including Majority Leader, Rep. Steny Hoyer, and Minority Leader, Rep. Mike Pence, 10 major committee chairmen, minority leaders and 27 committee vice presidents. The strong bipartisan support for this project includes 124 Democrats and 58 Republicans. It is the greatest support of any status bill in our history and only 10 other bills in this Congress can boast such support.

"Congress needs to ensure the consent of the governed."

- Pedro Pierluisi

In just 5 months since the filing of H.R. 2499, it had a public hearing, went through mark-up in the full committee, was approved by an overwhelming majority, received a favorable Natural Resources Committee report and is now awaiting to be sent to the floor of the House of Representatives for a vote. Resident Commissioner Pedro Pierluisi, in his first year as a member of Congress, has been able to gain unparalleled support for a process of self determination for Puerto Rico. This is important so that the bill has enough time to run through the legislative process.



APPOINTMENT OF SONIA SOTOMAYOR TO THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT

- Pierluisi urged the President to consider the appointment of Judge Sotomayor to the highest court.
- Attended several of Sotomayor's confirmation hearings in the Senate.
- Publicly expressed the pride he felt as an American citizen and a Puerto Rican that a woman of Puerto Rican origin becomes part of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The Resident Commissioner greets Judge Sotomayor

DISTRICT OFFICE
250 Fortaleza Street
Old San Juan
San Juan, PR 00901
Tel: (787) 723-6333
Fax: (787) 729-7738

CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE
1218 Longworth HOB
Washington D.C. 20515
Tel: (202) 225-2615
Fax: (202) 225-2514

TOLL FREE:
1 (866) 266-6678

E-MAIL:
PedroPierluisi@mail.house.gov

FACEBOOK: Pedro Pierluisi - In Congress TWITTER: twitter.com/pedropierluisi YOUTUBE: youtube.com/pierluisicongress

HEALTH

FEDERAL HEALTH REFORM

SO THAT EVERYONE IN PUERTO RICO HAS ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES



The Resident Commissioner speaks with Puerto Rico's Health Secretary, Lorenzo Gonzalez about the federal health reform

Congress is currently engaged in the final discussion of universal health coverage for the U.S. population. This initiative by the President Obama's administration is of historic proportions in the hopes of dealing with the serious problem of lack of services and accessibility to health care.

The inclusion of Puerto Rico in various aspects of the reform is critical to improving our health care system on the island. The Resident Commissioner has been working continuously to ensure that the needs of Puerto Rico are considered in both committees in the U.S. Senate and the three committees of the House of Representatives where health legislation is being carried out. In addition, while other congressmen discuss the various aspects of the proposal, Pierluisi has had to concentrate on fighting so that Puerto Rico becomes part of this process, consequently assuring that the 4 million American citizens on our island are taken into account.

Resident Commissioner Pedro Pierluisi announced recently that the leadership of the U.S. House of Representatives has made the decision to include Puerto Rico and the other U.S. territories in all key aspects of the federal health reform legislation now pending in Congress.

The White House has also expressed its support for Pierluisi's request that residents of Puerto Rico and the other territories be eligible to receive federally-subsidized coverage through the new health care Exchange. Nancy Ann DeParle, the White House's health "Czar," communicated the view of the White House to House leadership on behalf of President Barack Obama. Congressman Pierluisi and Governor Luis Fortuño have met with DeParle on multiple occasions.

Various senators have also publicly expressed their support for including Puerto Rico and the other territories in the health care Exchange. Senators Chris Dodd, Tom Harkin, Bob Menéndez, Charles Schumer, Jeff Bingaman, John Kerry and John Ensign are among the proponents of Puerto Rico's inclusion and have sent a letter to the Senate leadership expressing this support.

"If the federal health reform is approved, Puerto Rico will receive an extraordinary amount of additional federal funds to be used to restructure the health reform as we have promised our electorate. We are talking about an increase of funding of three times what we receive by October 2010, and up to five times what we receive today by 2019."

MEDICAID Puerto Rico receives Medicaid fixed funds that limit the federal contribution to only 17% of health costs for needy people in Puerto Rico. In other states the federal contribution varies between 50% and 85%. Parity in Medicaid would mean up to five times the amount of funding we receive now to help Puerto Rico improve its services, extend their cover of the Reformation and increase the population served.

MEDICARE The disparities that Puerto Rico faces in Medicare are even more unfair because Puerto Ricans contribute to this program. Address gaps in rebates to hospitals for services rendered, reimbursement to equate jurisdictions serving a large population of homeless people known as medical-DSH, while equalizing the condition of our elderly recipients in B and D Medicare, are a priority.

HEALTH CARE EXCHANGE The main objective of the negotiations is that Puerto Rico can participate in this Health Care Exchange. The center will offer subsidized options, with competitive prices, affordable to the American population that is not covered under Medicaid and have no other access to a health insurance plan. The goal is, and must be, that no one is without adequate health insurance in Puerto Rico.



VISIT OF ASTRONAUT JOSEPH ACABA

- Resident Commissioner Pedro Pierluisi received leading astronaut Joseph Acaba-Smith in his office, who is the first Puerto Rican that has been to space. He expressed a deep pride shared by the people of Puerto Rico upon learning of his achievement and Puerto Rican heritage.

The Resident Commissioner received astronaut Joseph Acabá-Herrero