



Congressman Pedro R. Pierluisi  
Extension of Remarks  
Introduction of *El Yunque National Forest Preservation Act*  
*March 1, 2012*

Mr./Madame Speaker:

Today, I am introducing legislation designed to preserve and protect El Yunque National Forest in Puerto Rico. El Yunque, which is the only tropical rainforest administered by the U.S. Forest Service, is a source of great pride for the people I represent and a major economic driver on the Island. Over one million people from all over the world visit El Yunque each year—to walk along its beautiful trails, to sample its eco-tourism pleasures, and to gain a greater understanding of its ecological importance. El Yunque is featured on a quarter released into circulation last month as part of the U.S. Mint’s “America the Beautiful Quarters Program,” and a public launch ceremony to mark this occasion is scheduled to be held in El Yunque on March 14<sup>th</sup>.

To protect El Yunque’s rich biodiversity and to provide a buffer zone against encroaching urbanization, forest administrators need to acquire a number of parcels of land. Thus, my legislation would require the federal government to use funds currently generated by activities within El Yunque for investment back into El Yunque for land acquisition purposes.

I hope my colleagues will join me in taking this commonsense step to protect a national treasure.