



June 27, 2016

The Honorable Mitchell McConnell
Majority Leader
US Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Democratic Leader
US Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Democratic Leader Reid:

I am Dr. David Bernier, former Secretary of State of Puerto Rico, as well as current candidate for Governor of the Popular Democratic Party (PPD, for its Spanish acronym), which I preside. As you know, the PPD is the governing party, controlling the Executive and Legislative branches in Puerto Rico.

I have written to you on several occasions expressing my opposition to, and deep concerns with, H.R. 5278, the so-called "PROMESA" bill. These concerns are shared by a clear majority of Puerto Ricans who are opposed to this bill, as well as is every candidate for governor of every political party, due to its undemocratic financial control board, the lack of real tools for economic growth, and the uncertain treatment given to pensioners, among other reasons.

Fortunately, it is still not too late. That is why I urge you to approve five amendments being proposed by Senator Robert Menéndez, which would remedy many of the fatal flaws contained in this bill. One of these amendments would ensure that our retirees are given a real priority during this process. Other amendments are aimed at guaranteeing a minimum level of participation by Puerto Ricans on the control board and making sure essential services are rendered.

Most importantly, one of these amendments would prevent the federal overreach and wholesale takeover of Puerto Rico's government by striking Section 205 of PROMESA. This would ensure that voters' elected representatives have the last say over the Commonwealth's government, instead of a group of 7 unelected Washington bureaucrats. Surely the Governors and state legislators of Kentucky and Nevada would not accept the type of blatant violation of their fundamental right to self-government that would be imposed on Puerto Rico under this bill.

For these reasons we urge you to adopt the amendments proposed by Senator Menéndez, as they would avert the violation of Puerto Ricans democratic rights and ensure the protection of our retirees' hard-earned public pensions. We will therefore continue to oppose the PROMESA bill unless and until these amendments are included in the final legislation.

Sincerely,

Dr. David Bernier
Secretary of State of Puerto Rico, 2013-2015
President, Popular Democratic Party