



Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy
Floor Statement as Prepared for Delivery
Support for the Puerto Rico Admission Act of 2018
June 27, 2018

Mr. Speaker:

I rise to express my support for bipartisan legislation to begin Puerto Rico's transition to statehood.

There are over three million U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico, and over five million individuals of Puerto Rican heritage in the states. My central Florida district is home to more Puerto Ricans than nearly any other district in the country.

I care deeply about Puerto Rico because my constituents care deeply about Puerto Rico. But *every* Member of Congress should care because Puerto Ricans are our fellow citizens. We're part of the same American family.

Puerto Rico has been a territory for 120 years. Its residents are treated unequally under key federal laws. This impairs economic progress and quality of life, spurring migration to the mainland.

In addition, even though Puerto Ricans serve in the military with distinction, they cannot vote for their President and commander-in-chief, have no senators, and have one non-voting delegate in the House.

The hard truth is that Puerto Rico's lack of political power too often makes it an afterthought in Washington, as the federal government's poor response to Hurricane Maria made painfully clear.

I support statehood because I support equality. The people of Puerto Rico deserve the same rights and responsibilities as their fellow citizens in Florida and every other state. Puerto Rico has earned its star on the American flag.

Thank you.