

**STUDENT SENATE BILL 2019-1090**

**TITLE: Resolution in Solidarity with the Puerto Rican People**

**AUTHOR(S): Senator Alfredo Ortiz, Florida Latinx Hispanic American Student Union President Katie Hernandez**

**SPONSOR(S): Senator Alana Rush, William Zelin, Senator Mary Faas, Latinx Caucus Leader Mauricio Perez, Senator Kevin Trejos, Senator Anthony Portugues, Senator Maria Espinoza**

**WHEREAS**, Puerto Rico faced significant unrest following the Federal Bureau of Investigation's prosecution of six persons in or related to Governor Ricardo Rosselló's administration for corruptly handling government funds; and,

**WHEREAS**, Governor Ricardo Rosselló resigned because the unrest progressed into mass protests in response to the leaking of nearly nine-hundred pages of texts exchanged with members of his administration, deemed by different sources to be inappropriate and otherwise sexist, homophobic, and transphobic; and,

**WHEREAS**, the texts include evidence that the administration downplayed the Hurricane Maria death tolls down 2,975 or higher down to 64, and joked about using the casualties from Hurricane Maria to suppress dissent; and,

**WHEREAS**, Secretary of Justice Wanda Vázquez is also involved in the scandals for failure to prosecute persons responsible for withholding resources for the recovery of Puerto Rico following Hurricane Maria, and was next in the line of succession to become governor until a Secretary of State was appointed; and,

**WHEREAS**, Pedro Pierluisi was appointed as the Secretary of State without the consent of the Puerto Rican Senate, and was sworn-in as Governor of Puerto Rico despite perceived conflicts with the law; and,

**WHEREAS**, the scandal and succession crisis have provoked continued unrest and drawn international attention, and the situation affects both Puerto Ricans at the University of Florida and elsewhere; then,

**THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate condemns the attitudes expressed by members of the Rosselló administration to be sexist, homophobic, transphobic and otherwise inappropriate and welcomes the administration's apology.

**THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate welcomes the resignation of those related to the scandals but recognizes the work and impact of the Rosselló administration.

**THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the protestors' sacrifice, and stands in solidarity with the people of Puerto Rico in their efforts to continue to hold their government accountable and retain their national sovereignty.

*Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to Unión de Estudiantes Puertorriqueños Activos President Kimberly Ramirez, University of Puerto Rico at Rio Piedras Student's General Council Directive President Neftalí Sánchez Cordero, Dean of the International Center Leonardo A Villión, Associate Dean of Students and Senior Director of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs Will Atkins, Director of Hispanic Latino Affairs Bianca Z. Quiñones, University of Florida Center for Latin American Studies Assistant Director Lenny Ureña, STAAR Agency Head Derlis Leyva, Diversity Cabinet Chair Stephanie Beltran, and Hispanic Student Association President Isabella Oliver.*

- [1] <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/julia-keleher-ex-education-secretary-others-arrested-fraud-puerto-rico-investigation-2019-07-10/>
- [2] <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2019/07/puerto-rico-ricardo-rossello-telegram-chat-hurricane-maria-protest-demonstration>
- [3] <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/24/us/rossello-puerto-rico-governor-resigns.html>
- [4] <https://www.foxnews.com/us/puerto-rico-governor-raises-hurricane-maria-death-toll-from-64-to-2975>
- [5] <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMsa1803972>
- [6] <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/07/25/puerto-rico-who-is-wanda-vazquez-poised-replace-gov-rossello/1824814001/>
- [7] [https://www.cnn.com/us/live-news/puerto-rico-protests-07-22-2019/h\\_cc3bf675658c59bf358881f7829747c3](https://www.cnn.com/us/live-news/puerto-rico-protests-07-22-2019/h_cc3bf675658c59bf358881f7829747c3)
- [8] <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/27/us/puerto-rico-violence-protests.html>
- [9] <https://www.apnews.com/f5cf2e213b384e17a3ebce2232d6206d>
- [10] [https://news.vice.com/en\\_us/article/9kxxx/puerto-ricans-arent-done-protesting-la-junta-is-why](https://news.vice.com/en_us/article/9kxxx/puerto-ricans-arent-done-protesting-la-junta-is-why)