

# FAOCES

## CHAMPIONS OF PUERTO RICO

2026

*Honoring this year's recipients of the Champions for Puerto Rico Award*

PRESENTED IN COALITION WITH





**Senator Mike Lee**

*United States Senator for Utah*

## WHY A CHAMPION FOR PUERTO RICO

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Introduced the bipartisan Puerto Rico Recovery Act to waive the Jones Act for disaster-relief vessels — lowering the cost of getting aid and goods to the Island — and is a consistent voice for reducing federal barriers to Puerto Rico's recovery and commerce.

## ABOUT

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Senior U.S. Senator for Utah since 2011. A constitutional attorney, he serves on the Senate Energy & Natural Resources and Judiciary Committees.



**Senator Rick Scott**

*United States Senator for Florida*

## WHY A CHAMPION FOR PUERTO RICO

Among the first officials to visit Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria, he pushed for full Medicaid reimbursement and affordable-housing credits for the Island and supports respecting Puerto Rico's vote on its status — a steady champion for the more than one million Puerto Ricans in Florida.

## ABOUT

Senior U.S. Senator for Florida since 2019 and former two-term Governor of Florida. A Navy veteran and healthcare entrepreneur.



## Senator Martin Heinrich

*United States Senator for New Mexico*

### WHY A CHAMPION FOR PUERTO RICO

As the lead Democrat on the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee, he has fought to protect the \$1 billion Puerto Rico Energy Resilience Fund and to direct federal investment toward modernizing the Island's grid with reliable, resilient power.

### ABOUT

U.S. Senator for New Mexico since 2021 and Ranking Member of the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee; previously served two terms in the U.S. House.



**Senator Ben Ray Luján**

*United States Senator for New Mexico*

## WHY A CHAMPION FOR PUERTO RICO

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A senior Hispanic voice in the Senate and a health-care leader, he has worked to strengthen Medicaid and Medicare — programs central to Puerto Rico's funding cliff — and to expand connectivity and resilience for underserved communities.

## ABOUT

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U.S. Senator for New Mexico since 2021 and former House Assistant Speaker. He serves on the Commerce and Finance Committees.



**Rep. Darren Soto**

*U.S. Representative — Florida's 9th District*

## WHY A CHAMPION FOR PUERTO RICO

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The first member of Congress of Puerto Rican descent elected from Florida, he led the historic Puerto Rico Status Act — the first binding status bill to pass a chamber — and passed the Territories Health Care Improvement Act for fairer Medicaid funding.

## ABOUT

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U.S. Representative for Florida's 9th District since 2017. A champion of Hurricane Maria recovery and of the Borinqueneers Congressional Gold Medal.



**Pablo José Hernández**

*Resident Commissioner for Puerto Rico*

## WHY A CHAMPION FOR PUERTO RICO

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Puerto Rico's sole representative in Congress and its leading federal advocate — author of the Puerto Rico Energy Generation Crisis Task Force Act and a forceful defender of the Island's energy-resilience and federal-recovery funding.

## ABOUT

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Resident Commissioner for Puerto Rico in the U.S. House of Representatives since 2025. An attorney and the Island's voice before Congress.



## Andrés Martínez-Fernández

*Senior Policy Analyst — The Heritage Foundation*

### WHY A CHAMPION FOR PUERTO RICO

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Through his “Security and Prosperity” work, he has made the national-security case for Puerto Rico — an indispensable U.S. manufacturing and reshoring asset that reduces dependence on China and strengthens America's supply-chain security.

### ABOUT

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Senior Policy Analyst for Latin America at the Allison Center for National Security, The Heritage Foundation.



**Rep. María Elvira Salazar**

*U.S. Representative — Florida's 27th District*

## WHY A CHAMPION FOR PUERTO RICO

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A co-sponsor of Puerto Rico statehood legislation and of the MMEDS Act to rebuild the Island's pharmaceutical industry, she is a consistent advocate for Puerto Rico's equality and economic revitalization.

## ABOUT

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U.S. Representative for Florida's 27th District since 2021. An Emmy-winning journalist who spent part of her childhood in Puerto Rico.



**Rep. Nicole Malliotakis**

*U.S. Representative — New York's 11th District*

## WHY A CHAMPION FOR PUERTO RICO

Lead sponsor of the MMEDS Act (HR 3042) and the Supply Chain Security and Growth Act (HR 1328) — landmark bills offering federal tax credits to reshore pharmaceutical and critical manufacturing to Puerto Rico.

## ABOUT

U.S. Representative for New York's 11th District since 2021 and a member of the House Ways & Means Committee.



**Gabriella Boffelli**

*Executive Director — PR Federal Affairs  
Administration*

## WHY A CHAMPION FOR PUERTO RICO

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As Puerto Rico's chief representative in Washington, she leads the Island's federal advocacy — protecting and advancing its appropriations, health-care, energy, and infrastructure priorities before Congress and the federal agencies.

## ABOUT

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Executive Director of the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration since 2025; previously chief of staff to then-Resident Commissioner Jenniffer González-Colón.



## Catherine “Katie” Jereza

*Assistant Secretary, Office of Electricity — U.S.  
DOE*

### WHY A CHAMPION FOR PUERTO RICO

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Leading the Department of Energy's electricity and grid-modernization programs, she directs DOE's Puerto Rico energy engagement — work that is central to rebuilding the Island's reliable, resilient power system.

### ABOUT

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Assistant Secretary for the Office of Electricity, U.S. Department of Energy (sworn in 2025); 30+ years across the energy, water, and manufacturing industries.



**Sean P. Duffy**

*U.S. Secretary of Transportation*

## WHY A CHAMPION FOR PUERTO RICO

Lead sponsor of PROMESA as a Congressman — the law addressing Puerto Rico's debt crisis — and, as Transportation Secretary, a partner in modernizing the Island's ports, highways, and air cargo, including a \$109M investment in the Port of San Juan.

## ABOUT

20th U.S. Secretary of Transportation and former U.S. Representative for Wisconsin; also serving as acting NASA Administrator.



**Chris Klomp**

*Deputy Administrator, CMS · Director, Center for Medicare*

## WHY A CHAMPION FOR PUERTO RICO

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As Director of the Center for Medicare, he leads Medicare Advantage policy — the coverage most of Puerto Rico's Medicare beneficiaries rely on — with a focus on plan stability and fairer risk adjustment that bears directly on the Island.

## ABOUT

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Chief Counselor of HHS, Deputy Administrator of CMS, and Director of the Center for Medicare; a former healthcare-technology CEO.