

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE
RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2017, the Secretary of the Senate, on January 22, 2018, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the House has agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 195) to amend title 44, United States Code, to restrict the distribution of free printed copies of the Federal Register to Members of Congress and other officers and employees of the United States, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House agreed to the following concurrent resolution, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 33. Concurrent resolution providing for a correction in the enrollment of H.R. 195.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2017, the Secretary of the Senate, on January 22, 2018, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 195. An act making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2017, the enrolled bill was signed on January 22, 2018, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. PORTMAN).

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER
COMMUNICATIONS

The following communication was laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and was referred as indicated:

EC-4130. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a proclamation relative to imports of large residential washers and certain crystalline silicon photovoltaic cells (whether or not partially or fully assembled into other products); to the Committee on Finance.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-163. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislative Assembly of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico requesting the President of the United States and the United States Congress take any and all actions to immediately transfer the operations of the Puerto Rico Air National Guard from its current location at the Muniz Air National Guard Base

in the Luis Munoz-Marin International Airport (LMMIA) to the Jose Aponte-De la Torre Airport in the grounds of the former Naval Station Roosevelt Roads in Ceiba; to the Committee on Armed Services.

JOINT RESOLUTION 73
STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Public Law 114-187 (2016), known as the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act (PROMESA), establishes a process to identify as "critical" certain projects directed at addressing fiscal and infrastructure emergencies in Puerto Rico, and whose approval, consideration, permitting, and implementation shall be expedited and streamlined. Among the "critical" projects are those that are deteriorating and that affect the development of Puerto Rico such as, construction or capital improvement projects in abandoned sectors. Thus, pursuant to PROMESA, the Governor of Puerto Rico, Ricardo A. Rosselló-Nevarez signed Executive Order 2017-003 of January 2, 2017, whereby he declared a state of emergency in Puerto Rico with regard to the infrastructure for the rendering of services, directing all government agencies to adhere to the expedited process provided in PROMESA when issuing permits, consultations, endorsements, comments, recommendations, and certifications for infrastructure projects.

Furthermore, as part of the public policy established by this administration and included in the Plan for Puerto Rico, the redevelopment of Roosevelt Roads constitutes one of the projects identified as emblematic, critical, urgent, and necessary for the economic recovery and the sustainable economic development of Puerto Rico. In order to implement said public policy, the Governor of Puerto Rico established, through Executive Order 2017-004 of January 2, 2017, the "21st Century Critical Infrastructure Project Interagency Group" attached to the Office of the Governor, charged with coordinating the efforts and works of government entities in the evaluation and issuance of permits and other necessary transactions for the development of critical, strategic, and emblematic infrastructure projects presented pursuant to PROMESA. It is, therefore, the duty of said Interagency Group to coordinate the efforts to render the Roosevelt Roads' emblematic and critical redevelopment project feasible.

Over fifteen (15) years have transpired since the Naval Station Roosevelt Roads in Ceiba was closed. The continuous operation of said military installation injected approximately \$300 million annually to Puerto Rico's economy. As a result of the closure of the Base, Puerto Rico's economy has suffered losses that exceed \$4.5 billion in conservative estimates. Despite the great potential of those lands for the redevelopment and economic revitalization of the region as well as of Puerto Rico, and despite the citizens' constant demands, said facilities are still abandoned and deteriorating. This is the result of the inability to promote private investment in the area to turn it into an economic development center for the benefit of Puerto Rico. In a report submitted to the United States Congress by the Congressional Task Force on Economic Growth on December 20, 2016, the Task Force expressed its concern about the slow pace of the effort to redevelop Roosevelt Roads for the economic benefit of the People of Puerto Rico and that it believes that a well-planned and well-executed redevelopment strategy has the potential to transform eastern Puerto Rico. Therefore, the Task Force recommends that the Government of Puerto Rico, working in conjunction with the Revitalization Coordinator established under PROMESA, elected leaders of the surrounding communities,

Federal Government agencies with jurisdiction over the matter, and the private sector, prioritize the efficient and effective redevelopment of Roosevelt Roads.

According to an analysis published by the specialized magazine *Urban Affairs Review* (Amanda Johnson Ashely and Michael Touchton; *Reconceiving Military Base Redevelopment Land Use on Mothballed U.S. Bases*; *Urban Affairs Review*, 2016 Vol. 52(3) 391-420. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1078087414568028>) local market conditions and the level of economic productivity in a former military community are likely to influence the variety of land uses that appear on former bases. More economically productive communities are likely to have more redevelopment options at their disposal than less productive, potentially less affluent communities. The analysis suggests that commercial interests are more willing to invest in more affluent rather than less affluent areas or communities.

Evidently, Puerto Rico's economic situation as well as the decreased productivity and growth of our economy prevent us from creating favorable conditions to successfully promote private investment in Roosevelt Roads and severely limit the available options for the redevelopment thereof. The Roosevelt Roads Naval Station Lands and Facilities Redevelopment Authority issued several requests for proposals (RFP's) in past years; however, it has failed to achieve the redevelopment and conservation of the Naval Station's installations and existing infrastructure. That being the case, the immediate creation in the area of more favorable conditions that promote and attract private investment shall reactivate the area's economy and broaden the uses to be given to the different areas that are part of or surround the former naval station, in the José Aponte-de la Torre Airport.

Consistent with the foregoing, this Legislative Assembly deems it convenient to transfer the operations of the Puerto Rico Air National Guard, currently located at the Luis Muñoz-Marin International Airport, in Carolina, Puerto Rico, to the airstrips of the José Aponte-De la Torre Airport in the former Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.

For the past decade, the National Guard has undergone a notable transformation, from being nothing more than a strategic reserve of limited use to the United States Armed Forces, to becoming an operational reserve that must be available and ready to provide support to the military operations of the Armed Forces at all times. At present, the installations of the Muñoz Air National Guard Base, located in the municipality of Carolina and which occupy approximately 96 cuerdas of the lands of the Luis Muñoz-Marin International Airport, do not allow our Air National Guard to expand its operations, much less to adapt to their changing role and the future missions that may be assigned thereto in support of the Armed Forces. The air facilities of the José Aponte-De la Torre Airport in the former Naval Station Roosevelt Roads are available and would provide additional space that is optimal, functional, operational, and necessary for the strengthening and growth of our Air National Guard.

In the judgment of this Legislative Assembly, the proposed transfer would be the most viable option to stimulate and create the conditions, in a very short term, for the redevelopment of the former Naval Station Roosevelt Roads which would, in turn, generate economic activity as in the past. This alternative would greatly benefit all of Puerto Rico because it would enable the immediate creation of an economic activity center in the area, as a result of the Puerto Rico Air National Guard starting operations in the José Aponte-De la Torre Airport.