

GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO

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SENATE OF PUERTO RICO

S. R. 288

September 5, 2025

Introduced by Mr. *Rivera Schatz*

Referred to

RESOLUTION

To express, on behalf of the People of Puerto Rico, the Senate of Puerto Rico's full support of the actions taken by the President of the United States, the Hon. Donald J. Trump, and his Cabinet in the fight against drug trafficking and the illegitimate regime of Nicolás Maduro; and reaffirm Puerto Rico's commitment to fully support the measures adopted to ensure safety, peace, regional stability, and the quality of life of the U.S. citizens living in Puerto Rico, the United States, and the Caribbean by making our resources available to fully aid in this effort.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

The illegal drug trade constitutes one of the most serious and direct threats to the national security of the United States and Puerto Rico. Transnational criminal organizations use our shores and maritime routes to smuggle drugs into the United States thus inciting violence, as well as causing poverty, and community deterioration. A fact that has been underestimated or ignored for years is that a considerable part of the operations conducted by these criminal organizations is closely linked to the illegitimate regime of Nicolás Maduro who has transformed the state apparatus into an accomplice and facilitator.

Nicolás Maduro's regime lacks democratic legitimacy because he has remained in power through fraudulent electoral processes that lack transparency. Furthermore, Nicolás Maduro has persecuted, imprisoned, and forced into exile opposition members, journalists, and activists, and has systematically used political violence to silence all dissent. The kidnapping of opposition leader María Corina Machado is just one example of the human rights violations that this Body has already rejected through Senate Resolution 7. While the People of Venezuela experience hunger, live in extreme poverty, and face the collapse of essential services, Maduro and his inner circle use the state apparatus as an instrument to increase their personal wealth and live a privileged lifestyle. As stated in Senate Resolution 224, approved on June 9, 2025, the socialist, dictatorial, and repressive regime of Nicolás Maduro constitutes a betrayal of the democratic aspirations of the Venezuelan people, and a political, economic, and humanitarian crisis without precedent in this hemisphere. Likewise, President Trump described the regime as a dictatorship and publicly urged the members of the Venezuelan armed forces to rethink their loyalty and help restore democracy in their country.

Although the U.S. Department of Justice had already accused Nicolás Maduro of being the head of a criminal organization that engages in drug trafficking and narco-terrorism in 2020, this reality was not always firmly addressed. Firm and decisive actions are now being taken under the leadership of President Donald J. Trump and his Administration. In August 2025, Attorney General Pam Bondi, in conjunction with the Secretary of State, doubled to \$50 million the reward offered for information leading to the arrest and/or conviction of Nicolás Maduro and declared him to be one of the "largest narco-traffickers in the world" and a "threat to our national security" — "Under President Trump's leadership, Maduro will not escape justice and he will be held accountable for his despicable crimes." In the

President's own words: "Maduro is a fugitive narco-trafficker, one of the most wanted in the world, and he will not escape justice."

In addition to these statements, President Donald J. Trump and his Cabinet have taken firm actions in response to this threat. As recently as September 2, 2025, as part of the strategy to combat transnational drug trafficking, the U.S. military conducted an operation in the southern Caribbean that resulted in the sinking of a Venezuelan drug vessel and the deaths of eleven (11) people as reported by Trump himself. The strike was carried out against a vessel linked to the Tren de Aragua gang which was designated as a terrorist organization by the United States last February. In the words of Secretary of State Marco Rubio: "For over a decade, Maduro has been a leader of Cartel de los Soles, which is responsible for trafficking drugs into the United States." In addition, Attorney General Pam Bondi stressed that: "Maduro uses foreign terrorist organizations like [Tren de Aragua], Sinaloa [cartel] and Cartel of the Suns to bring deadly drugs and violence into our country," further adding that the Department of Justice has seized tons of cocaine linked to the Venezuelan leader. Other actions taken include the deployment of military equipment to the region such as several warships and ten (10) F-35 fighter jets, among others.

The video disseminated by the White House which displayed the military might of the United States and the decision to include drug traffickers in the objectives subject to the use of lethal force circulated around the world and served as a clear warning: there is no safe refuge for whoever engages in drug trafficking. This clear and direct message confirms that the United States is willing to employ any means necessary to protect its citizens — including those who live in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean — from the threat posed by the drug trafficking supported by the Nicolás Maduro regime.

The Senate of Puerto Rico, as a democratic institution that values the principles on which the United States, the nation we aspire to fully join, was founded, has not remained indifferent. This Body has passed legislation to strengthen the fight against crime, including drug trafficking, and has passed resolutions outright condemning the illegitimate regime of Nicolás Maduro and his attacks on democracy and human rights. Likewise, we have informed the capitol of the United States of Puerto Rico's desire to collaborate with the Federal Government and assume an active role in ensuring the security, stability, and peace of the United States, including Puerto Rico and the entire Caribbean. Therefore, we reaffirm our full support of the actions taken by the President of the United States, the Hon. Donald J. Trump, and his Cabinet and we place any resources necessary at their disposal in order to contribute to the eradication of drug trafficking and the defeat of narco-dictator Maduro.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.- To express, on behalf of the People of Puerto Rico, the Senate of Puerto Rico's full support of the actions taken by the President of the United States, the Hon. Donald J. Trump, and his Cabinet in the fight against drug trafficking and the illegitimate regime of Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela. Likewise, we outright condemn the actions of this regime which has usurped democracy, oppressed its people, and used the state apparatus as an instrument to facilitate drug trafficking and increase personal wealth.

Section 2.- The Senate of Puerto Rico hereby places any resources necessary at the disposal of the Government of the United States to aid in its efforts to ensure the security, stability, and peace of the U.S. citizens living in Puerto Rico, the United States, and the Caribbean.

Section 3.- A copy of this Resolution, translated into the English language, shall be delivered to the President of the United States, the Vice President, the

Secretary of State, the United States Attorney General, the Secretary of Defense, and the relevant Chairs and Committees of both Houses of Congress, as well as to media outlets for broad dissemination.

Section 4.- This Resolution shall take effect upon its approval.