

U.S. House Floor Speech  
**Congressman Pablo José Hernández Rivera**  
Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico  
June 5, 2025

Mr. Speaker,

I rise today to address the betrayal by the Government of Puerto Rico to our immigrant communities.

For the benefit of my constituents and the communities affected, I will offer my remarks in Spanish.

**Spanish**

*Esta foto es de un plato dominicano conocido como el “tres golpes”—contiene huevo frito, salami frito y queso frito.*

*De más está decir que lastima el corazón. Pero no lastima el corazón tanto como los tres golpes de traición que la comunidad de inmigrantes de Puerto Rico ha recibido de manos de su gobierno.*

*El 19 de enero, la gobernadora de Puerto Rico dijo que los inmigrantes en la isla no debían preocuparse porque ICE no iba a hacer redadas fuera de la frontera con México.*

*El 26 de enero, ocurrió la primera redada. Detuvieron inmigrantes documentados, en violación a sus derechos.*

***Ese fue el primer golpe.***

*El 27 de enero, la gobernadora dijo que iba a cooperar con las políticas migratorias del presidente.*

***Ese fue el segundo golpe.***

*Y ayer, salió a relucir que el Departamento de Transportación y Obras Públicas, que desde el 2013 otorga licencias de conducir a las personas, sin cuestionar su estatus migratorio, estaba compartiendo la información de inmigrantes con las agencias de inmigración.*

***Ese fue el tercer golpe.***

*Voy a ser claro: Todos queremos que los inmigrantes estén con sus papeles al día. Todos queremos que quien viole la ley enfrente consecuencias.*

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*Pero nadie puede defender que un Gobierno engañe a su comunidad más vulnerable. Nadie puede defender que el Gobierno les pida información personal para darles una licencia de conducir y que luego entregue la misma al gobierno federal para que los investiguen y los deporten.*

*Estamos hablando de seres humanos. Estamos hablando de niños que podrían perder a sus padres. Estamos hablando de ancianos que podrían perder a sus hijos cuidadores.*

*El Gobierno de Puerto Rico dirá que, si no coopera, perdería fondos federales para carreteras.*

**Mentira.** El gobierno federal—la constitución de los Estados Unidos—asigna el poder de la cartera al Congreso, y la rama ejecutiva no puede congelar fondos que el Congreso asignó para un propósito específico.

*El Gobierno de Puerto Rico puede defender sus derechos de su gobierno propio y el de su comunidad inmigrante en los tribunales.*

*Veinte estados ya lo han hecho. Veinte. Demandaron al Gobierno federal por condicionar fondos federales a cambio de cooperación con inmigración. ¿Y el Gobierno de Puerto Rico? **Cobarde.***

*En esa demanda, los 20 estados citan al menos ocho precedentes judiciales en favor de jurisdicciones que han resistido presiones similares del Gobierno federal. Ocho precedentes. ¿Y el Gobierno de Puerto Rico? **Cobarde.***

*La historia no tendrá misericordia: el Gobierno de Puerto Rico traicionó a los dominicanos, a los haitianos, a los venezolanos y a tantos otros inmigrantes para complacer a Donald Trump.*

*Como me dijo un amigo: les dieron tres golpes y los tiraron a mondongo.*

Mr. Speaker, I yield back.

### **English Translation**

This photo shows a Dominican dish known as “three blows”—it includes fried egg, fried salami, and fried cheese.

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Needless to say, it breaks your heart. But it doesn't break your heart as much as the three blows of betrayal that the immigrant community in Puerto Rico has received at the hands of its government.

On January 19, the Governor of Puerto Rico said that immigrants on the island had nothing to worry about because ICE wasn't going to conduct raids outside the border with Mexico.

On January 26, the first raid occurred. Documented immigrants were detained, in violation of their rights.

**That was the first blow.**

On January 27, the Governor said she was going to cooperate with the President's immigration policies.

**That was the second blow.**

And yesterday, it came to light that the Department of Transportation and Public Works—which since 2013 has issued driver's licenses to individuals without questioning their immigration status—was sharing immigrant information with immigration agencies.

**That was the third blow.**

Let me be clear: We all want immigrants to have their paperwork in order. We all want those who break the law to face consequences.

But no one can defend a government deceiving its most vulnerable community. No one can defend a government asking for personal information to issue a driver's license and then handing it over to the federal government so they can be investigated and deported.

We are talking about human beings. We are talking about children who could lose their parents. We are talking about elderly people who could lose the children who care for them.

The Government of Puerto Rico will say that, if it doesn't cooperate, it would lose federal highway funds.

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**A lie.** The federal government—the Constitution of the United States—assigns the power of the purse to Congress, and the executive branch cannot freeze funds that Congress has allocated for a specific purpose.

The Government of Puerto Rico can defend its self-government and its immigrant community's rights in court.

Twenty states have already done so. Twenty. They sued the federal government for conditioning federal funds on cooperation with immigration enforcement. And the Government of Puerto Rico? **Coward.**

In that lawsuit, the 20 states cited at least eight legal precedents in favor of jurisdictions that resisted similar pressure from the federal government. Eight precedents. And the Government of Puerto Rico? **Coward.**

History will have no mercy: the Government of Puerto Rico betrayed Dominicans, Haitians, Venezuelans, and so many other immigrants to please Donald Trump.

As a friend told me: they gave them three blows and threw them into the stew.

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