

**Puerto Rico brings good news on its fifti**

**A**

According to Pierluisi, Puerto Rico is overcoming the challenges and “the future is bright.”

There is still work to be done, but the governor’s positive report is welcome news to all New Jerseyans with family or emotional connections to Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico’s economy hit the lowest point in 2016, when it entered a restructuring process similar to a bankruptcy approved by Congress. The so-called Promesa Act also imposed a fiscal control board to oversee Puerto Rico’s finances.

The restructuring law permitted Puerto Rico to cut its debt by more than \$30 billion, and issue new debt worth \$10 billion. But with the rescue plan, there were conditions to avoid a repeat of the past fiscal problems.

The island’s finances have been under the supervision of the fiscal board for the last eight years. The board scrutinizes the finances of the island. The fiscal review board will automatically go away once the island achieves four consecutive years of balanced budgets.

Puerto Rico has now approved a balanced budget each of the last two years. The governor said fiscal troubles are now in the past and that Puerto Rico provides economic and government stability.

The power grid and electrical system is another immense problem decades in the making. People often experience power outages. The system has now been privatized as required by law. Luma Energy, a private company, is beginning to make inroads in the delivery system. However, the power generation system remains quite fragile.

Pierluisi delivered the state of the island remarks to a gathering of state and local Latino leaders at the Showboat Resort in a reception sponsored by the New Jersey Puerto Rico Commission.

The commission was established to encourage bilateral trade and investment; to serve as a forum to discuss policy issues of mutual interest to New Jersey and Puerto Rico; and to promote economic development and trade.

The governor was welcomed to the city by Mayor Marty Small and Bert Lopez, president of the Hispanic Association of Atlantic County.

o  
pvo"