

AGC celebrates that the preference to the local contractor is already law

The announcement was made by Governor Ricardo Rosselló, during the oath of the new president Stephen Spears and the board of the organization

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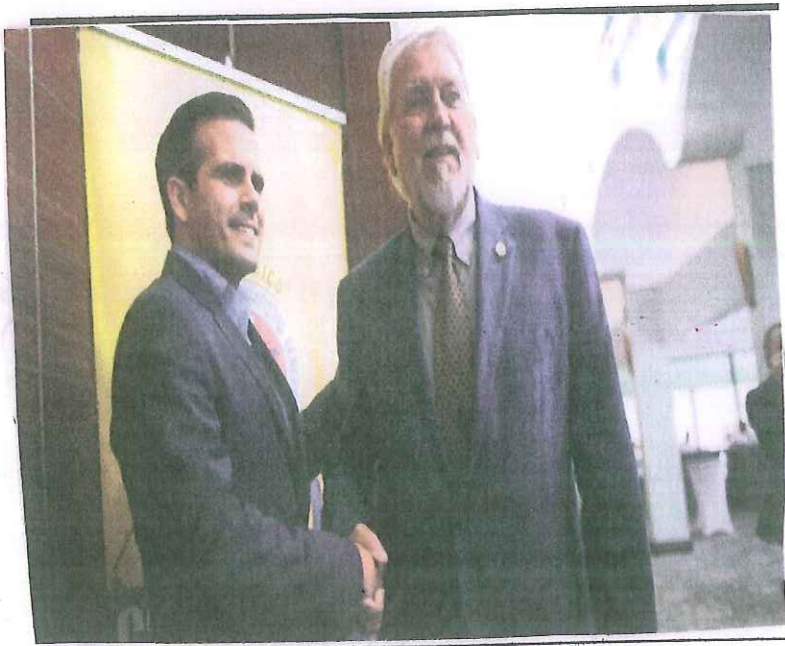
By Sharon Minelli Pérez

Governor Ricardo Rosselló Nevares greets the new president of the Association of General Contractors of Puerto Rico, Stephen Spears. ([Ramón Tonito Zayas](#))



The new board of the Association of General Contractors of Puerto Rico (AGC-PR) was sworn in yesterday and started its management with the news that Governor Ricardo Rosselló has already made a contractual preference for contractors and local suppliers of the construction industry. .

"We will have the mechanisms so that the contractor here has preferential treatment. It is not a whim, it is a necessity. We have the best tools and workers. We are going to put them to work. It is a benefit for our economic development," said Rosselló on the signature of the project authored by Senator Miguel Romero and promoted by the AGC.



Within hours of presenting the new fiscal plan before the Fiscal Oversight Board, Rosselló served as speaker at the inauguration of the new meeting, held yesterday at the La Concha hotel in Condado.

"This fiscal plan has an aspirational component. It is designed which is the Puerto Rico that we want," acknowledged the governor, including education, housing, roads and energy in the list of reforms that will lead in 2018.

He said that this year he will realize what he has announced since the beginning of his four-year term: an incentive code that retains support for sectors or activities that bear fruit and eliminates those that do not produce measurable results.

"We are going to work with a digital government reform. A lot of the dilation and the processes are based on a government that is too broad, too disconnected and deficient," he added on the side of information technology and accountability.

As for the tax reform, he confirmed that his plan is to reduce 50% in the first year the tax on transactions between businesses (B2B) and eliminate it next year.

"It's a necessary measure to reduce obstacles to doing business," Rossello said.

Anticipated that the IVU to processed foods "we will reduce it to 7% to boost the sector", and formulate a local equivalent to the credit for work ("Earned Income Tax Credit") to encourage the increase in the rate of labor participation, that currently around 39%.

With a view to alleviating the impact of the federal tax reform, which he estimated at \$ 1,700 million in seven years for the line of large companies only, Rosselló announced that his plan is to lower the maximum corporate rate from 39% to 29%.

The attendees received the measure with a loud standing applause.

For his part, the new AGC-PR president, Stephen Spears, celebrated Rosselló's move in favor of selling the assets and privatizing the Electric Power Authority. He indicated that this series of transactions, still pending legislation, will modernize the electricity system and will result in "a better quality of life for all."

Spears emphasized that contractors, companies and local suppliers must have significant participation in both the construction and maintenance of the facilities.

This insistence responds to the fact that, in the plan of his presidency, "number one is the defense to local hiring, whether federal or state," Spears said in an interview with Negocios.

"We are patio contractors, we have the capacity and the skills," stressed the veteran contractor, born in Indiana, but who has made Puerto Rico his home and place of business for more than 40 years.

To underline that this industry still generates the multiplying effect in the economy, particularly in the creation of jobs, he indicated that in the four months after Hurricanes Irma and María passed, "construction has doubled its workforce from 22,000 to about 40,000. to 45,000 people. " And this has only

been for repair and mitigation work.

"It is logical to expect that construction will create some 60,000 jobs in the coming years," he said. But, for this, he insisted that greater direct contracting of companies, suppliers and professionals of Puerto Rico is required.