



# THE CAPITOL

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO







OFFICE OF  
LEGISLATIVE SERVICES  
— LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF PUERTO RICO —

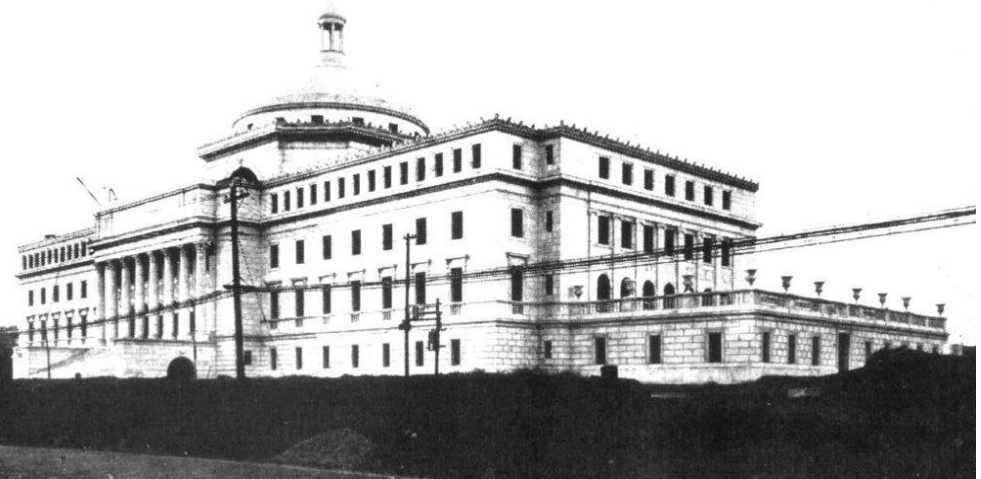
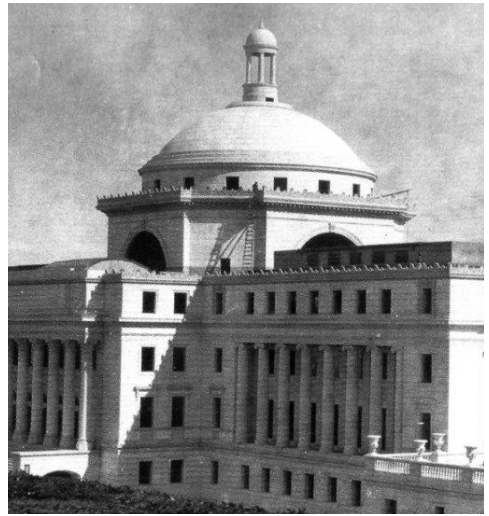
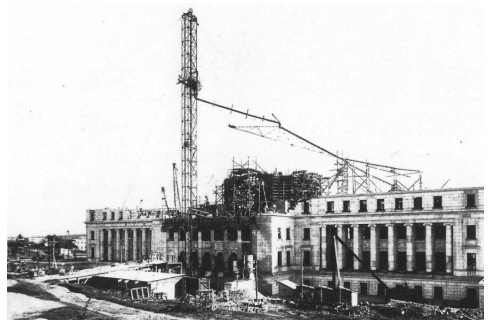
THE CAPITOL  
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO





## The Capitol

was inaugurated on February 11, 1929. The impressive structure, which is 51,814 ft<sup>2</sup> in size, was designed by Puerto Rican architect Rafael Carmoega and is an example of 20th century neoclassical architecture. The Capitol's construction took four years at a cost of three million dollars. In 1977, it was designated as a Historic Landmark of Puerto Rico.



Twenty-one (21) types of marble originating from Italy, the United States, and Spain were used in its construction. It has three characteristics that make it unique worldwide: its dome is completely covered in mosaics, its main façade overlooks the Atlantic Ocean, and it is completely covered in marble both inside and outside.





At its highest point, the dome reaches 80ft. The Seal of Puerto Rico, which includes several symbols of the original Coat of Arms, can be observed at the center. The Coat of Arms of Puerto Rico was given to the Island in November 1511, and is the oldest heraldic achievement still in use in the Americas.

The dome is decorated with eight muses fashioned out of venetian mosaics which represent liberty, education, agriculture, arts and letters, science, industry and commerce, health, and justice. Italian artist Gino Garibaldi completed the installation of the mosaics in 1962 after two years of work.



The mosaics depict several of Puerto Rico's most important historical events:

1 The Discovery of Puerto Rico. The Island was discovered by Christopher Columbus on November 19, 1493, during his second voyage to America.

2 The Conquest and Colonization of the Island. Representation of the three main groups that make up the People of Puerto Rico's ancestral roots: the Spaniards, Taínos, and Africans.

3 The Abolition of Slavery. Slavery was officially abolished on March 22, 1873, and it is one of the most glorious chapters in our history. This image shows a man breaking free of the chains of slavery.

4 The Autonomist Movement of 1887. This image shows Román Baldorioty de Castro and Luis Muñoz Rivera, two of the main leaders of the Autonomist Movement of 1887, accompanied by fellow members of the Autonomist Party. The Castillo San Felipe del Morro can be seen on the upper-right corner of the image, as well as a soldier escorting several autonomists placed under arrest.



## NORTH

Between the 16 Breccia Pernice marble columns there are four reliefs of pure white Carrara marble.

The **first panel** shows a council of Taínos deliberating community issues. Cacique Agüeybaná is sitting down and addressing the witch doctor, his warriors, and his people.



The **second panel** shows Juan Ponce de León and the government of Alcaldes discussing city affairs.



The **third panel** shows Juan Ponce de León dividing the Island into two parties: the San Germán Party to the West and the Caparra Party to the East.







The **first panel** displays Diego Menéndez (1582-1593), holding his hat, who was responsible for transforming the Castillo del Morro into a world-class fortress. Besides Diego Menéndez stands Julián Pavía (1867-1868) holding a sword. Julián Pavía was the governor at the time of the Grito de Lares uprising of 1868.



The **second panel** shows Juan A. Arizmendi, the first Puerto Rican to be consecrated Bishop, in 1809 giving his episcopal ring to Ramón Power y Giralt, the first Puerto Rican delegate to Spain, prior to Power y Giralt's departure to the Cortes of Cádiz to represent Puerto Rico.



The **third panel** shows the delegates of Puerto Rico in 1866 discussing matters related to the abolition of slavery in Puerto Rico.

## SOUTH

The **first panel** depicts the Provincial Deputation presided by Mr. Gabriel Baldrich in 1871.

The Provincial Deputation building served as the headquarters of the House of Representatives and the Senate until the Capitol Building was inaugurated in 1929.



The **second panel** depicts the Puerto Ricans who composed the first Autonomous Cabinet in February 1898. The Cabinet was dissolved by Governor Guy V. Henry on February 6, 1899.



The **third panel** depicts the American troops entering Guánica on July 25, 1898. General Nelson A. Miles and a marine raising the flag of the United States can also be seen.







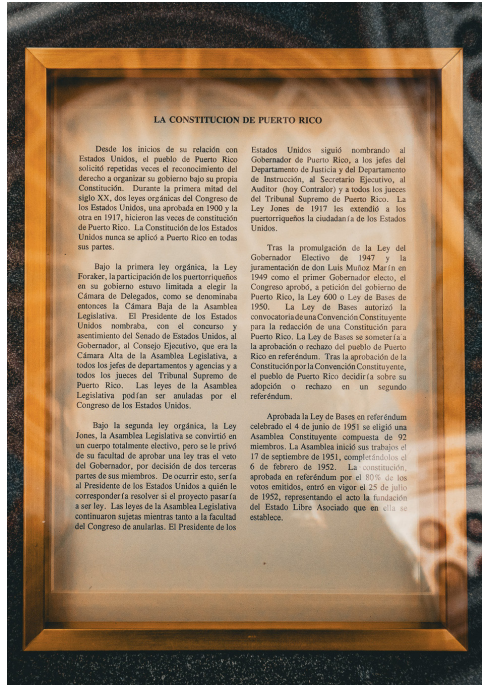
The **first panel** is a representation of the Foraker Act of 1900 which was enacted at the start of the political relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States. This Foraker Act established the first civilian government on the Island which was led by American governor Charles H. Allen. This Act also established Puerto Rican citizenship for persons born on the Island and replaced the provincial currency with the U.S. dollar.



The **second panel** is a symbolic representation of the Jones Act of March 2, 1917. In the panel, two men representing the United States deliver the Jones Act to a child surrounded by other citizens representing the People of Puerto Rico.

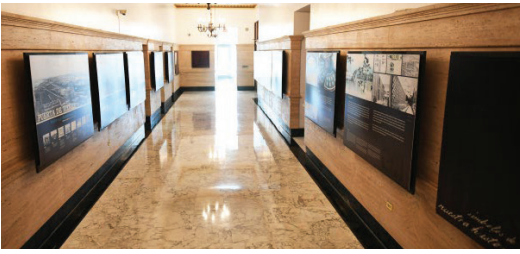


The **third panel** represents the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico which was ratified on July 25, 1952. The main figure is Luis Muñoz Marín who was one of the drafters of the Constitution and, in 1948, became the first governor of Puerto Rico elected by the People. Standing by his side is Antonio Fernós Isern, a fellow drafter of the Constitution. The flags of Puerto Rico and the United States can be seen in the background flying together for the first time.



The **Constitution of Puerto Rico** has been recognized as one of the most complete in the world. Its original documents are hermetically sealed and protected with bulletproof glass in a display case located at the center of the Capitol Building. The display case was presented on July 24, 1992, in an inauguration ceremony.





In the **Historical Gallery of the House of Representatives**, inaugurated in 2009, there is a photographic exhibit of the first eighty years of the Capitol's history from 1929 to 2009.



The **Historical Gallery of the Senate**, inaugurated on August 13, 2000, displays pictures of the first senators, first sessions, and other historical moments since its inception in 1917.



The **José Tous Soto and Antonio Fas Alzamora** Gallery consists of hallways in which art pieces by local and international artists are exhibited.



The **Ángel Viera Martínez Meeting Room** honors the man who served as Speaker of the House of Representatives for multiple terms and is located on the northern side of the House of Representatives.



In the **Sonia Sotomayor Illustrious Women Meeting Room**, located on the northern side of the Senate Chamber, oil paintings of the most prominent women in Puerto Rico's history are exhibited.

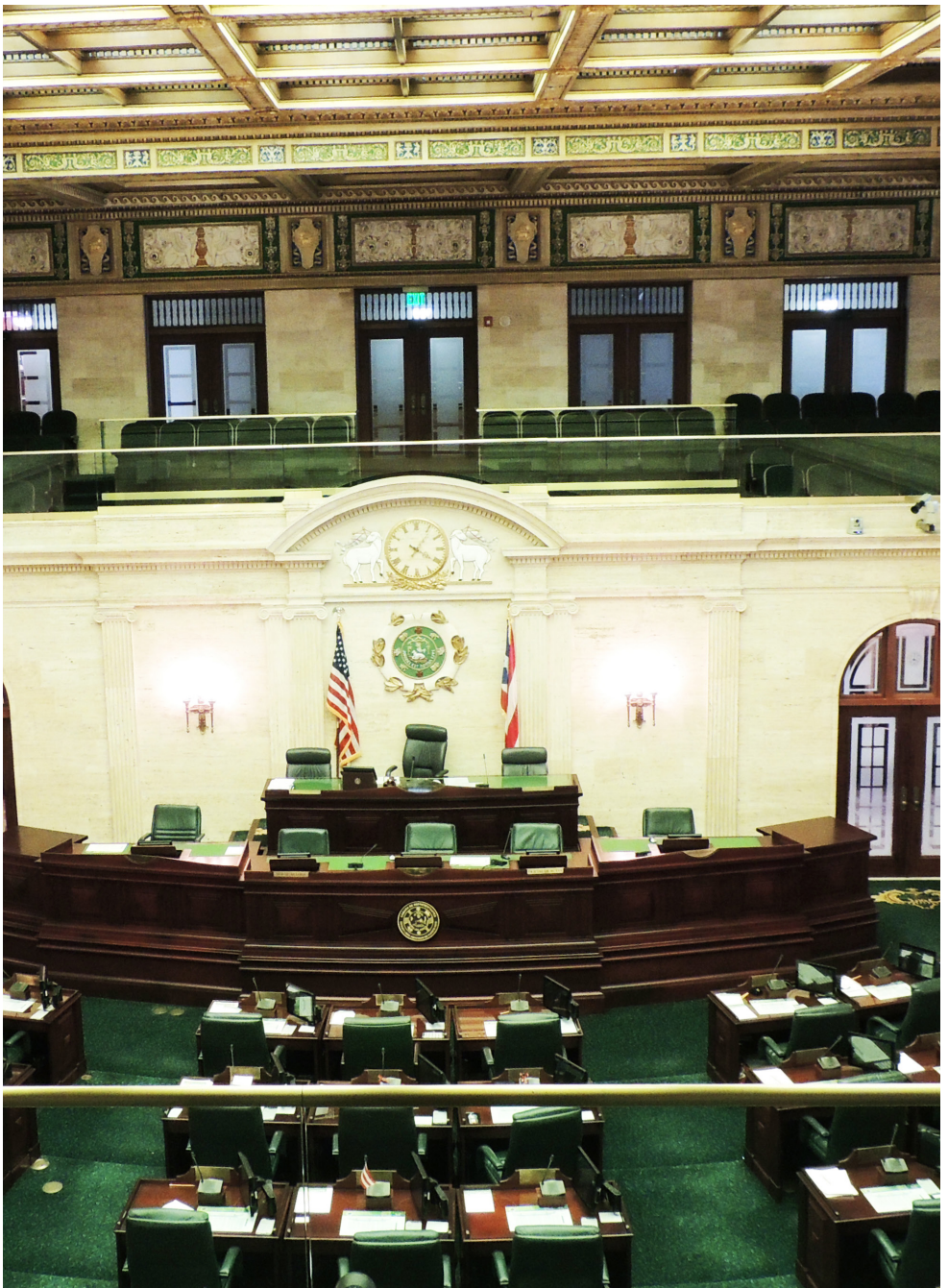


The **Julio Tomás Martínez Hall** in the southern foyer of the Capitol Building is used for art and literary exhibits by Puerto Rican artists and writers.



The **Senate Chamber**, located on the second floor, is where senators meet and hold sessions, carry out legislative work, and confirm the appointments of heads of government agencies, members of the Judicial Branch, and other public officers. The Senate adopted the color purple used by the Roman Empire in which the elders (Senectus) composed its deliberative democracy. Wealth was a requirement for council membership and the wealth of most members originated from vineyards.





The **House of Representatives Chamber**, located on the second floor, is where representatives meet hold sessions, carry out legislative work, and prepare the budget of Puerto Rico. The House adopted the color of the old House of Commons of England. At the time, this body was composed of the bourgeois (bourgeoisie), people from the working class who were mostly farmers. For such reason, they were associated with the color green.

The **Hall of the Speakers of the House of Representatives** and the **Hall of the Presidents of the Senate** display oil paintings of former Speakers and Presidents.

The oil paintings are located along the corridors leading to the chambers of each respective legislative body.



The **Dr. Leopoldo Figueroa Carreras Hall**, located on the first floor, is currently used as a hearing room by the Legislative Assembly.

However, it housed the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico between 1933 and 1955.



The **José Ronaldo “Rony” Jarabo Álvarez Terrace** and the **Rafael Hernández Colón Terrace** are located on the rooftop of the House of Representatives and Senate wings, respectively. The two terraces boast balustrades adorned with Greek vases known as kraters.



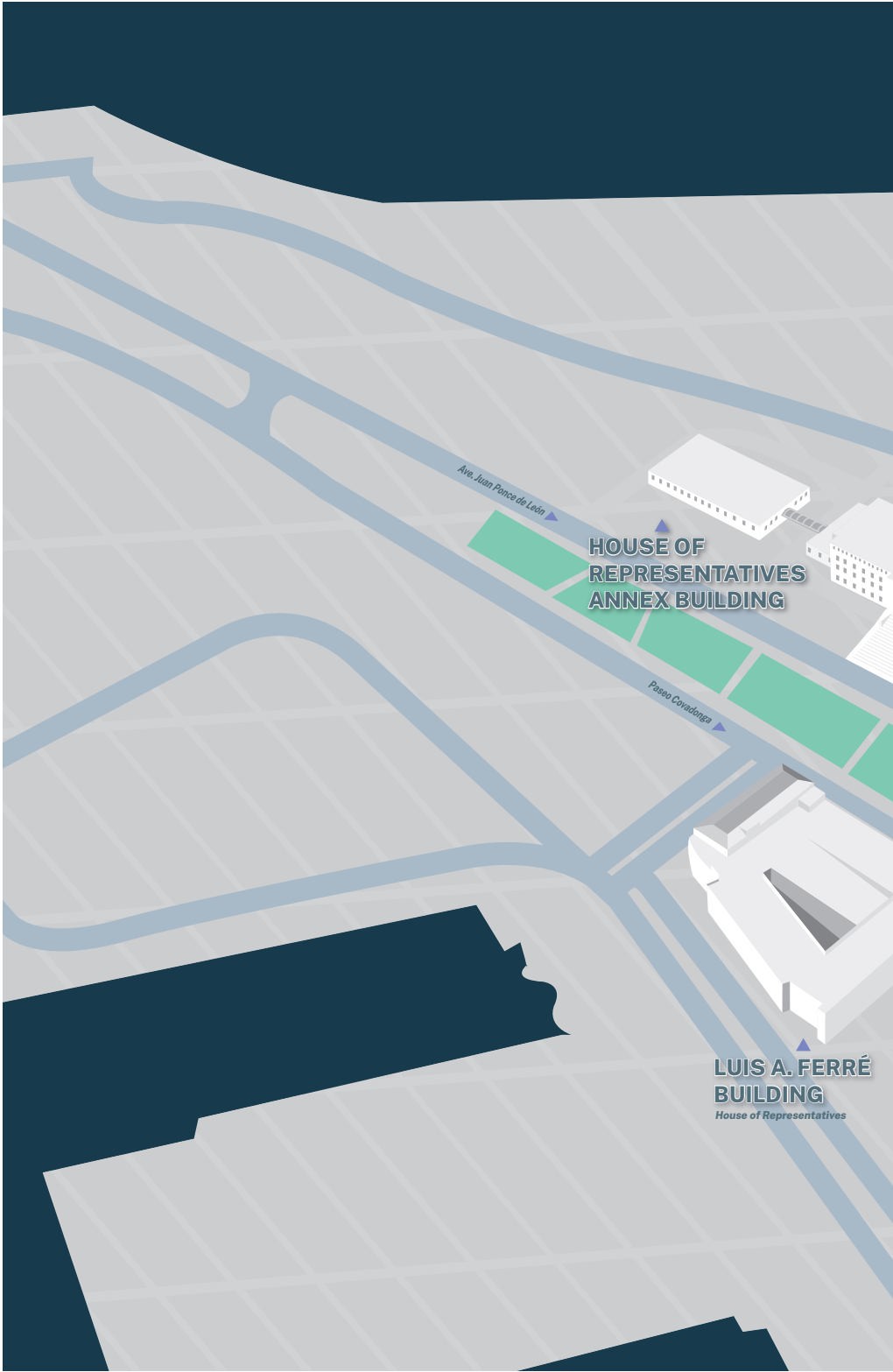




The **Illustrious Puerto Ricans Hall** on the second floor displays bronze busts of the founders of Puerto Rico's political parties. The busts of Luis A. Ferré Aguayo and Luis Muñoz Marín, the founders of the political parties that have ruled the Island since 1948 through democratic elections, are on display on the first-floor staircase landings.



The **cupola**, better known as the lantern, is an element used to crown a dome which admits light and air into the building and serves as a decorative element throughout many different styles of historicist architecture.



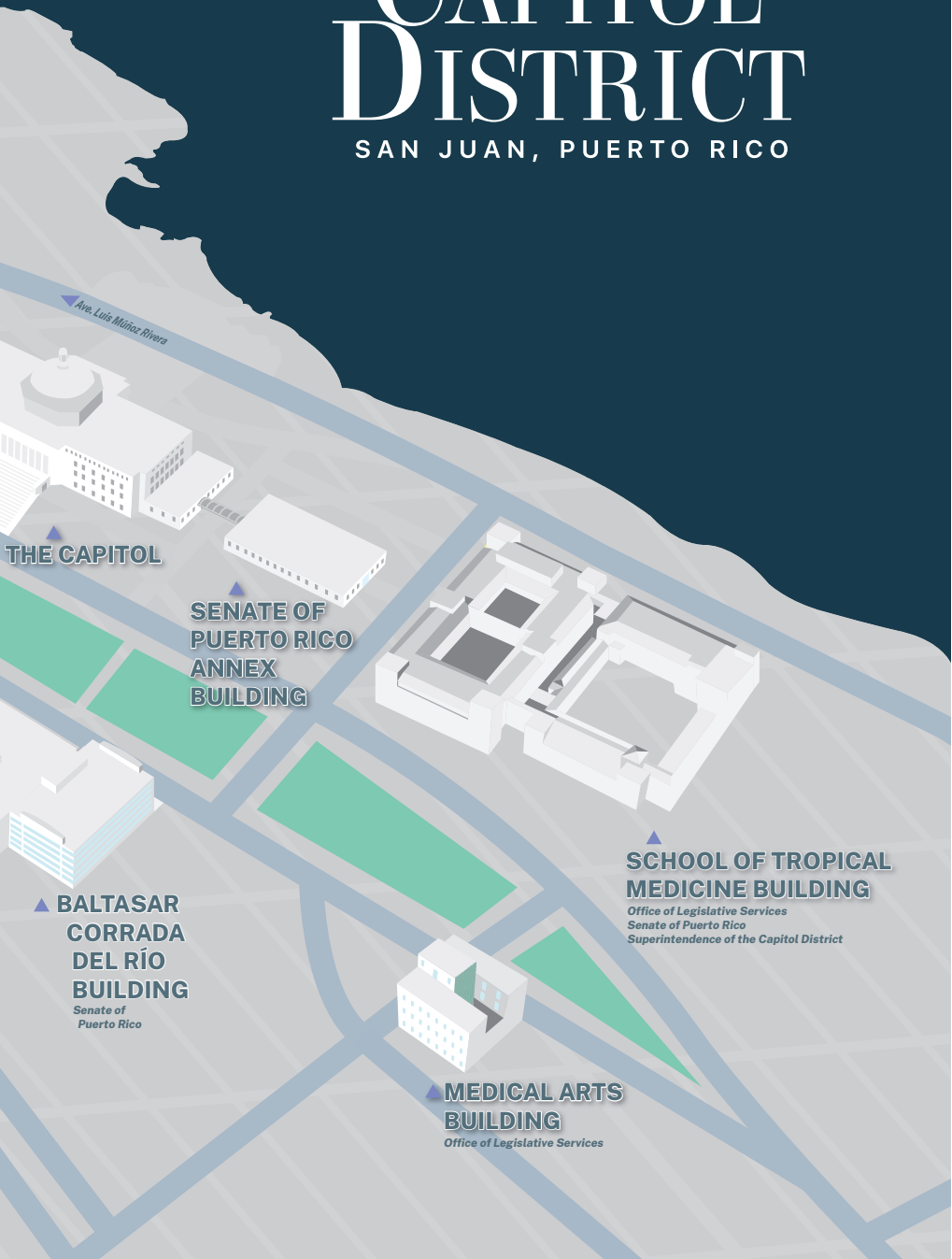
**HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES  
ANNEX BUILDING**

**LUIS A. FERRÉ  
BUILDING**  
*House of Representatives*



# CAPITOL DISTRICT

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO



Ave. Luis Muñoz Rivera

▲ **THE CAPITOL**

▲ **SENATE OF PUERTO RICO ANNEX BUILDING**

▲ **BALTASAR CORRADA DEL RÍO BUILDING**  
*Senate of Puerto Rico*

▲ **SCHOOL OF TROPICAL MEDICINE BUILDING**  
*Office of Legislative Services  
Senate of Puerto Rico  
Superintendence of the Capitol District*

▲ **MEDICAL ARTS BUILDING**  
*Office of Legislative Services*



# CAPITOL

**TOURISM OFFICE**  
OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVES SERVICES