



Talking Points on Puerto Rico's Political Status

On November 6, 2012, Puerto Ricans will vote in a plebiscite to determine the island's future political status. Voters will first be asked: do you want to retain Puerto Rico's current status as a commonwealth, or would you like to change Puerto Rico's political status? Voters will then be asked: would you prefer independence, a sovereign free association, or statehood?

If a majority of citizens support changing the political status, the results of the second question will determine the will of the people with regard to future status. Should Puerto Ricans elect to choose a new political status, the United States Congress will be responsible for approving or denying that request. As this decision nears, it is important to vocalize the following:

- A supermajority (rather than a simple 51% majority) of citizens must support a change in political status in order for the vote to be considered valid. America cannot accept a state in which less than an overwhelming majority of citizens support the decision.
- Should Puerto Ricans elect statehood, all schooling, with the exception of foreign language instruction, must be conducted in English.
 - Puerto Rico is currently exempt from the English language testing provisions of federal education law. Should residents choose statehood, Puerto Rico must be held to the same standards as the other 50 states.
- Should Puerto Ricans elect statehood, citizens must consent to English being the sole official language.
 - Congress has previously set language expectations for other territories with a significant non-English speaking population that went on to become states. Puerto Rico should be held to the same standard.
- Should Puerto Ricans elect statehood, the Puerto Rican government, at all levels, must function entirely in English.
 - Currently in Puerto Rico, legislative and judicial proceedings are conducted in Spanish. Should statehood be chosen, English should be the sole language for official record in Puerto Rican courts, and English should be spoken by employees of the government on the island.