

Statement from:

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As the Report of the President's Task Force on Puerto Rico's Status makes clear once again, democracy at the national government level and full equality under the American flag is only achievable through statehood. Polls in Puerto Rico have shown pretty consistent growth in support for statehood. The 2008 elections gave Puerto Rico's elected officials a mandate to enable a status choice that will lead to an end of the colonial status. It is time for that choice.

The Report of the President's Task Force is detailed and comprehensive. It lays out many possible processes for resolving the question of the territory's status. Most important, it should put an end to the debate about whether "Commonwealth" must be a territory status. The Obama Task Force agreed with past Federal administrations of both national political parties that under "Commonwealth" Puerto Rico remains subject to the broad authority of the Federal government -- in which Puerto Rico has no votes -- to govern unincorporated territories as it sees fit, limited only by the fundamental rights of individuals, and that Puerto Rico would remain subject to this authority under any "Commonwealth" arrangement. The Popular Democratic Party's dream of an "enhanced Commonwealth status," one that would be permanent and end Federal territory governing authority is simply unachievable.

The leaders of the PPD need to decide if they want a Puerto Rico to continue as a territory without votes in its national government and equality for Puerto Ricans with other U.S. citizens or the territory should have the democracy, equality, and dignity that is only possible through nationhood or statehood -- with statehood being the only status that offers this under the U.S. flag.

The Center for Puerto Rico Equality and Advancement (CPREA) calls upon the leaders of the PPD to accept the realities of the status options, stop trying to misinterpret the Report of the President's Task Force to confuse people about its plain meaning, give up making impossible status proposals that delay resolution of the issue, and stop trying to impede the people of Puerto Rico from choosing their preference among possible statuses.

CPREA applauds the Task Force report for dissipating fears concerning Puerto Rico's language and culture. As in other states of our union, Puerto Rico's culture, language, and identity under statehood would be a part of the fabric that has made our Nation great. English would continue to play the same important role in Puerto Rico as it does today.

The Report of the Task Force should lead to a growth in the ranks of the statehood movement by burying myths about the status options as loyal American Puerto Ricans who have been misled by the PPD realize that the only way to obtain full democracy, equality, and security and, at the same time, to continue to enjoy our rich linguistic and cultural heritage is through statehood. This should lead to a majority of Puerto Ricans choosing statehood in a choice among real status options.