

Fact Sheet:

Statehood Wins in Puerto Rico Vote

February 2021

- **Unquestionable Majority Support Statehood:** On November 3, 2020, an unquestionable majority in Puerto Rico voted to be admitted as a state.
 - Never before had voters in the territory been asked if they favored statehood with a simple “YES” or “NO” question.
 - Official certified results show 52.5% support “YES” out of 1.2 million ballots cast, with 47.4% “NO”.
 - In total, over 655,000 ballots were cast for statehood.

- **Third Vote for Statehood in Ten Years:** This vote marks the third time in less than a decade where the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico have rejected the current territory status, and called on Congress to grant them full equality and voting rights under statehood.
 - Unlike the last two votes in 2012 and 2017, there was no organized effort to boycott the vote or to cast blank ballots, meaning that the results this time are definitive.
 - Over 147,000 more ballots were cast for statehood in 2020 than in 2017.
 - Voter participation was over 54.7% and nearly identical to participation in the rest of the general election.
 - Voter participation exceeded many mainland federal elections that received no credible challenges on the basis of participation.
 - 2010 – 41%
 - 2014 – 36%
 - 2018 – 50%
 - All individuals, organizations and parties opposed to statehood campaigned and voted for the “NO” option.

- **Non-Binding Votes are Meaningful:** Although no locally sponsored vote can ever be binding on the U.S. Congress, plebiscites are meaningful because they provide Congress with an awareness of local opinion. The plebiscite is a clear statement of the will of the Puerto Rican people, and they are saying “statehood is our future.”
 - Similar referendums were held in Hawaii in 1940 and Alaska in 1946 to inform Congress of the will of the people and build political pressure and a moral imperative for Congress to act.
 - In the case of Hawaii and Alaska, the initial local votes encouraged Congress to pass statehood admission bills that required a final statehood ratification vote by territory residents.
 - In both cases the percentage of voters supporting statehood grew significantly between the first locally sponsored vote, and the final ratification vote mandated by federal legislation.

- **Support for Statehood is Growing in the States:** Almost every public poll leading up to the election showed statehood receiving support from voters in the states.
 - Multiple polls on the U.S. mainland, including one from Gallup in 2019, show

growing public support among the American public for Puerto Rico's admission as a state.

- One 2020 poll of stateside Puerto Ricans, including those voting in the swing states of Pennsylvania and Florida, concluded that 86% of Puerto Ricans would be more inclined to support candidates that endorse statehood.
- **Greater support for statehood than any political party or candidate in Puerto Rico:** Statehood is not a partisan issue – it has support across the political spectrum. There were over 143,000 more votes for statehood than for Resident Commissioner Jenniffer González-Colón, the most popular local elected official based on 2020 election results.
- **Statehood Movement Continues to Diversify:** Support for the “YES” to statehood vote came from individuals, candidates and parties unaffiliated with the pro-statehood New Progressive Party (NPP).
 - Candidates and activists from the Movimiento Victoria Ciudadana (MVC or Citizens Victory Movement), a new political party, also actively campaigned for the “YES” option.
 - Among these is Puerto Rico state Rep. Jose Bernardo Marquez, a candidate for the MCV who actively campaigned for the “YES” option.
 - Puerto Rico state Rep. Lisie Janet Burgos Muñiz of the Proyecto Dignidad (Dignity Project) Party is also a vocal statehood supporter.
 - Reps. Marquez and Burgos Muñoz become the first pro-statehood politicians elected outside of the NPP since 1964.
- **Puerto Rico Statehood Demands National Attention:** The unprecedented level of stateside media coverage of Puerto Rico statehood shows there is a growing national awareness of the need to address this issue in Congress.
 - Both candidates for President, the Republican and Democratic leaders in the U.S. Senate and countless others, spoke about Statehood for Puerto Rico during the 2020 campaign.
- **There is Bi-Partisan Support for Statehood in Congress:** In the lead up to the vote, multiple members of Congress in the U.S. House and Senate, from both sides of the aisle, expressed support for the plebiscite and for statehood including: Sen. Marco Rubio, Rep. Stephanie Murphy, Rep. Rob Bishop, Rep. Darren Soto, Rep. José Serrano, Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick and others.
 - Additionally, a bi-partisan group of 23 House members led by Rep. Darren Soto and Rep. Jenniffer Gonzalez-Colon introduced H.Res.1113, a resolution calling for Congress to take action on the results of the plebiscite.
- **Vote was Free, Fair & Transparent:** The vote was carried out in a free, fair and secure manner by the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission.
- **Congress must now respect the will of Puerto Rico's voters, and take action on the results.**