



REPUBLICAN PARTY OF PUERTO RICO

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Statement of the Republican Party of Puerto Rico In Support of the U.S. Justice Department Request for a Plebiscite in Puerto Rico

The Republican Party of Puerto Rico urges all Republicans in Congress to support the U.S. Justice Department Fiscal Year 2014 Budget request to provide for voter education and a plebiscite in Puerto Rico. The small amount of funds were prompted by and would positively respond to a 2012 plebiscite under local law.

Last Election Day, substantial majorities of Puerto Ricans voted against the islands' current territory status and for beginning the transition to statehood. The budget would enable the aspirations of the Americans of Puerto Rico to be confirmed by conducting a vote under Federal auspices.

The U.S. Attorney General would have to determine that “the voter education materials, plebiscite ballot, and related materials” for the proposed plebiscite are not incompatible with the Constitution and laws and politics of the United States” for the \$2.5 million to be used. This will eliminate the possibility of further dispute about the petition for equality of the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico.

The United States made Puerto Rico a territory in 1898, made Puerto Ricans citizens in 1917, and Puerto Ricans have contributed greatly to the Nation in the armed forces and otherwise. But whether Puerto Rico will eventually become a State or a nation has not been determined, Puerto Ricans do not have voting representation in the government that makes their national laws, and Puerto Ricans are treated unequally in some Federal laws.

The budget provision is consistent with the 2012 Republican Party platform, approved eight months ago:

We support the right of the United States citizens of Puerto Rico to be admitted to the Union as a fully sovereign state if they freely so determine. We recognize that Congress has the final authority to define the constitutionally valid options for Puerto Rico to achieve a permanent non-territorial status with government by consent and full enfranchisement. As long as Puerto Rico is not a State, however, the will of its people regarding their political status should be ascertained by means of a general right of referendum or specific referenda sponsored by the U.S. government.