

## Why Does The Puerto Rico Status Act (PRSA) Exclude The Current Territory Status?

### MAJORITY OF PUERTO RICO'S VOTERS HAVE REJECTED THE CURRENT TERRITORY STATUS

- On November 6, 2012, Puerto Rico held a nonbinding plebiscite where 54% of voters rejected the island's current territory status in the general election, and preferred statehood over the other options.
- On November 3, 2020, Puerto Rico held a nonbinding plebiscite where 52.5% of voters selected **statehood** again as their preferred option, achieving more support than any candidate in that election.
- The 2020 vote was the third plebiscite in over a decade in which the majority of Puerto Rico's voters elected to end the current territory status.

### UNDER THE CURRENT TERRITORY STATUS FULL EQUALITY IN PUERTO RICO CANNOT BE GUARANTEED

- According to the U.S. Supreme Court, Congress may discriminate upon the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico in terms of benefits, services, and certain constitutional rights merely for residing in the territory.
- Even if Congress were to extend to the residents of Puerto Rico parity in terms of federal benefits and programs, under the unincorporated territory status there is no guarantee that a subsequent Congress could not pass legislation to rescind those benefits and services.
- As an unincorporated territory, the U.S. citizens residing in Puerto Rico are governed at the federal level without their consent by having a non-voting member in the House, no representation at all in the Senate, and the inability to vote for President.

### THE PRSA IS A CONSENSUS LEGISLATION FOR PUERTO RICO TO ACHIEVE SOVEREIGNTY

- The purpose of the PRSA is for Puerto Rico to achieve a nonterritorial and fully self-governing political status among constitutionally viable options: *statehood, independence, and sovereignty/independence in free association with the U.S.*
- As an unincorporated territory, Puerto Rico is a possession of the U.S. and unlike states not a separate sovereign from the federal government.
- Both of the PRSA's predecessors, The *Puerto Rico Self-Determination Act* and the *Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act*, sought for self-determination options outside the Territorial Clause of the U.S. Constitution.
- As long as Puerto Rico remains a under the Territorial Clause of the U.S. Constitution, the island will never achieve the equality, representation, and sovereignty required for the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico to fully recover and prosper.

