

Puerto Rico Is Indispensable to U.S. National Security Statehood Will Strengthen America

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Puerto Rico is a strategic national security asset for the United States. Recent military operations in the Western Hemisphere—including the removal of Venezuelan dictator Nicolás Maduro—demonstrated the island’s operational value as a staging ground for U.S. force projection.

Yet the 3.2 million U.S. citizens living in Puerto Rico lack voting representation in Congress and cannot vote for the President. This contradiction undermines American democratic principles and weakens long-term strategic stability.

Congress has the authority—and responsibility—to resolve Puerto Rico’s territorial status and provide a binding path to statehood.

PUERTO RICO: AMERICA’S CARIBBEAN BORDER

For more than a century, Puerto Rico has served as a forward operating platform for:

- Power projection throughout Latin America and the Caribbean
- Protection of vital shipping lanes and maritime trade routes
- Countering malign influence from China, Russia, Venezuela, and Cuba
- Homeland defense within the Western Hemisphere

Recent developments underscore its importance:

- Increased U.S. military presence and reactivation of key installations
- National security strategy shifting focus to the Western Hemisphere
- Reported use of Puerto Rico as a staging and landing point for assets involved in operations in Venezuela



Puerto Rico’s geographic location, U.S. infrastructure, and bilingual workforce make it uniquely positioned for rapid deployment, logistics coordination, intelligence operations, disaster response, and regional stabilization efforts.

SERVICE WITHOUT REPRESENTATION

Despite its strategic role:

- Over **35,000 service members of Puerto Rican origin** serve in the U.S. Armed Forces.
- Residents of Puerto Rico **cannot vote for Commander-in-Chief**.
- Puerto Rico has **no voting representation in Congress**, where war powers are exercised and federal laws are enacted.

This creates a democratic contradiction:



The United States relies on Puerto Rico to defend democracy abroad while denying full democratic participation at home. As the nation marks the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the principle of “government by consent of the governed” remains unfulfilled for millions of American citizens.

TERRITORIAL STATUS WEAKENS U.S. STRATEGIC CREDIBILITY

Maintaining Puerto Rico as a territory:

- Fuels international criticism that the U.S. tolerates colonial arrangements.
- Undermines America’s moral authority when promoting democracy globally.
- Provides rhetorical ammunition to adversaries.
- Contributes to political instability and internal frustration that adversaries can exploit.

True security requires political legitimacy alongside military strength.

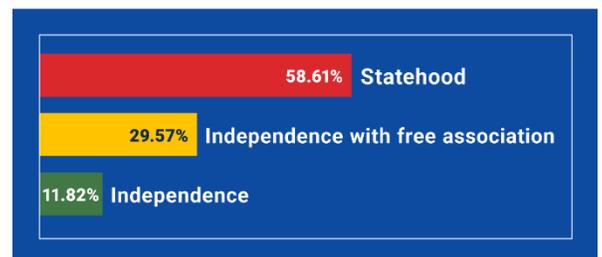
PUERTO RICO HAS VOTED FOR STATEHOOD

In 2024, Puerto Rican voters chose statehood in a locally administered referendum:

- **58% voted for statehood**
- A 29-point margin over the next highest option
- The fourth consecutive vote favoring statehood

Congress has not yet provided a binding mechanism to implement the will of the voters.

Certified 2024 Plebiscite Results



WHY STATEHOOD STRENGTHENS AMERICA

Statehood would:

- Align U.S. national security strategy with democratic principles
- Strengthen long-term political stability in a critical strategic location
- Reinforce U.S. credibility as a champion of self-determination
- Unlock Puerto Rico’s full economic and security potential
- Demonstrate that American citizenship guarantees equal rights

Puerto Rico is already indispensable to U.S. security. Statehood would ensure that this strategic partnership is grounded in equality, legitimacy, and constitutional stability.

CONGRESSIONAL ACTION NEEDED

Congress should:

1. Authorize a **binding self-determination vote** including statehood.
2. Establish a clear, federally recognized path to admission if approved.

The United States depends on Puerto Rico for regional security, power projection, and strategic influence. It is time for U.S. policy to reflect both strategic reality and American values.

Statehood for Puerto Rico will strengthen America—militarily, politically, economically and morally.



Puerto Rico Statehood Council

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