



August 9th, 2019

## California for Puerto Rico Solidarity Pledge

In July, 2019, from towns across Puerto Rico to [Los Angeles, California](#), Puerto Ricans took to the streets in an unprecedented moment of people power and unity to uproot corruption, sexism, homophobia, and media manipulation from the island's government. Through the [largest demonstrations in Puerto Rico's history](#) along with solidarity protests worldwide, we drove Governor Ricardo Rosselló to resign.

But the call for change did not stop with Rosselló's resignation. While we press on with ousting corruption from the island, across the diaspora-- of 5.1 million Puerto Ricans nationwide-- we are organizing to demand support for Puerto Rico in the form of urgent concrete actions by the federal government.

Puerto Rico deserves public school and healthcare systems that are not condemned to fail due to U.S.-imposed austerity measures. Puerto Ricans should not be forced to move to the United States in search of opportunities that were funneled off of the island. Workers should not lose their livelihoods to the crushing demands of Wall Street. Above all, the everyday people of Puerto Rico must have a say in their future of the island.

Following the recent seismic shift in Puerto Rico's political situation, we, as proud California residents, believe that our state should lead the way in setting a bold agenda that turns a values-driven progressive vision for Puerto Rico into policy reality. California Puerto Ricans are calling on the Golden State's political class to sign our *California for Puerto Rico Solidarity Pledge*.

Taking our cues from grassroots leaders across Puerto Rico and the diaspora, we call on California's elected officials, candidates and allied organizations to endorse the following policy outline:

- Support the following bills in progress:
  - U.S. Territorial Relief Act of 2019 - S. 1312, H.R. 2526 (Sen. Warren, Rep. Velázquez)
  - Equitable Nutrition Assistance for the Territories Act of 2019 0 S. 677, H.R.1576 (Sen Sanders, Rep. Velázquez)
  - Territories Health Equity Act of 2019 - S. 1773 (Sen. Sanders)
  
- Full participation of Puerto Rico residents in critical federal anti-poverty programs such as:
  - Medicaid
  - Child Tax Credit (CTC)
  - Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
  - SNAP
  - SSI
  
- Permanently exempt Puerto Rico from the Jones Act 46 U.S.C. §§ 55101
  - For the interim, immediately waive the Jones Act for Puerto Rico for 5 years via Executive Order.
  
- Audit Puerto Rico's debt and bring charges against government and corporate entities for which evidence of corruption is uncovered.
  
- A fully-funded mobilization to comprehensively rebuild and recover Puerto Rico from all damage wrought by Hurricanes Irma and Maria.
  
- Economic tools such as:
  - Fix how federal tax reform law treats Puerto Rico and provide tax incentives for job creation, along with improved labor standards
  - Replacing the austerity-driving fiscal control board with:
    - Significant public debt relief
    - Robust plan for a community- and worker-driven 21st century economic recovery

- Support civil rights:
  - Investigate Puerto Rican government's [infringements](#) against the right to protest
  - Investigate private prisons' [efforts](#) to profit by sending island's incarcerated population to U.S.-based private prisons
  - Audit and require the Puerto Rico Police to track gender-based, anti-LGBTQ, anti-immigrant and racial bias within their force.
- Promote Puerto Rico's right to self-determination, recognizing that lacking this right has exacerbated the Puerto Rico's economic crisis.

Even before this latest round of citizen-led resistance, the people of Puerto Rico were recovering from devastating firsts: one of the worst natural disasters and the largest bankruptcy proceeding in U.S. history, a depressed economy, and imminent fiscal cliff in public health, schooling and higher education, public pensions, and nutritional assistance. Many of these challenges are the result of artificial, arbitrary, and often discriminatory decisions made by the U.S. federal government. Only decisive action spurred by presidential and congressional leadership – together with detailed policy prescriptions – can move the needle on these complex issues.

We demand a new approach and perspective on Puerto Rico. While we work on crucial short-term solutions, here in California we demand that our elected leaders join us in reimagining what a bold, progressive platform for Puerto Rico looks like -- and prioritize crucial legislative action along that path.

To endorse the *California for Puerto Rico Solidarity Pledge*, please email [PuertoRicoCampaign@gmail.com](mailto:PuertoRicoCampaign@gmail.com).

For a list of elected officials, candidates and organizations who have endorsed the *California for Puerto Rico Solidarity Pledge*, please visit: [www.PuertoRicansInAction.com/CongressionalCampaign](http://www.PuertoRicansInAction.com/CongressionalCampaign)

**Endorsed by the following Organizations:**

Club Puertorriqueño de San Francisco

Boricuas of San Diego

Diáspora en Resistencia

The Creative Progressive Collective

SoCal for Puerto Rico

Club Puertorriqueño de San Francisco