



THE GOVERNOR ELECT OF PUERTO RICO

November 9, 2012

Barack Obama
President
United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As had been expected, the results of the plebiscite in Puerto Rico did not produce a clear result.

Although statehooders are claiming victory, that is not the case: the combined vote of Commonwealth supporters defeated statehood. This, however, is not easily understood because more than half of the Commonwealth supporters left the second ballot blank since that ballot did not include as an alternative Commonwealth as we know it. The rest of our supporters voted for a "sovereign commonwealth" because they did not want to leave the ballot blank, because of the fact that the word "commonwealth" was in the ballot, or because they favor free association between Puerto Rico and the United States.

The result of the plebiscite, confirmed the concerns expressed in your Task Force's Report that under the recent plebiscite structure, the people's actual status preference would be indecipherable. As the report states, a first vote that simply asks if people wish to preserve the status quo, followed by a second vote limited to alternatives, effectively masks the possibility that more people prefer the status quo to any of the alternatives taken individually. That was the case.

Close to 800,000 voted for the current political status. That was not enough to win the first vote, but only slightly lower than the number who voted for statehood on the second vote. However, it is impossible to determine if more voters favor Commonwealth to statehood because those who voted for the status quo on the first vote could also express a second preference in the second vote. Furthermore, if you consider that 470,000 chose to leave the second ballot blank, the votes for statehood, while officially reported as 61%, fall under the 50% mark (43.85%).

The Task Force Report and the Democratic Party's platform both recommend that if the results of local efforts do not provide a clear result, the White House should take the initiative in addressing the status issue. These results are evidently unclear.

The Task Force also recognized that the political status of Puerto Rico is closely related to the functioning of our economy which is in a precarious condition. Our unemployment is the highest in the nation. Our labor force participation is one of the lowest in the world. Two million Puerto Ricans, out of a total population of 3.7 million, have given up looking for work. This situation must be addressed as we address the status issue.

On behalf of the people of Puerto Rico as their Governor-elect, I formally request a meeting with you once I am sworn in on January 2, 2013, to discuss the above matters.

Cordially yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alejandro García Padilla', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Alejandro García Padilla