

My Commitment to Puerto Rico

Hillary Clinton
Democratic Presidential Hopeful

I want to share some of the ideas that will guide me in the White House because you deserve to know specifically what a candidate will do for Puerto Rico as president. You deserve a president who will give its issues as much attention as he or she gives to those of a State. I will do that.

Puerto Ricans have contributed greatly to the United States in both peace and war, and in all fields of endeavor. As First Lady, I led the presidential mission that recommended the special recovery assistance for Hurricane Georges. Later, I visited to stop the bombing on Vieques. I have served as a voice for Puerto Rico in the Senate, and helped lead Congress in passing legislation to treat the islands equally in expanding the Children's Health Insurance Program – a measure that George Bush wrongly vetoed, co-sponsored a law that extended a tax cut for manufacturing in the States to Puerto Rico, and proposed bills that would extend Child Credit payments to all Puerto Rican working families and to save the Arecibo radio telescope.

From Day One as President, it will be my priority to work with all factions and Congress -- and without preference among the options -- to finally resolve the question of Puerto Rico's ultimate status. I will address Congress on this and together, during my first term, we will enable the issue to be resolved. All people are entitled to a representative form of government at all levels, and Puerto Ricans are no exception. Puerto Rico should also have the status that a majority of its people want from among all of the options.

At the same time, I will help Puerto Rico overcome other challenges.

I will end inequities in health programs and provide truly universal health care in Puerto Rico. I am the only candidate who will ensure that everyone has health insurance - - including the approximately half a million Puerto Ricans who do not now -- by providing subsidies so insurance premiums do not exceed a small percentage of a family's income and small businesses will provide policies to their workers. I am also the only candidate who will: eliminate the limit on federal contributions to Medicaid in Puerto Rico; ensure Medicare will pay the same for in-patient hospital services in Puerto Rico that it pays everywhere else; and treat Puerto Ricans equally in Medicare assistance for physician and other services.

I will also expand the Child Credit payments to all workers not just those with three or more children in Puerto Rico as now. And I will extend similar payments to low-income workers without children.

I am committed to providing new tax benefits to revitalize Puerto Rico's economy, extending to Puerto Rico the wage credits and tax benefits of Empowerment Zones and other programs that stimulate investment in underdeveloped areas of the States. I will also make permanent the tax cut for income from manufacturing.

To fight crime, I will restore funding for the COPS program, among other measures.

I will also instruct federal agencies, such as the Census, to include you in all surveys and reports to make sure that you get your fair share of federal funding and to help businesses make investment decisions

In Vieques, I will have the federal government give up ownership of all of the land of the former range not needed for environmental reasons.

I will personally share my ideas with you during this historic primary campaign. And I will honor your support and will work from my first day in the White House with Puerto Rico always in my heart. With your support, I will be a President for Puerto Rico as well as the States.

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