



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

4805 MT. HOPE DRIVE • BALTIMORE, MD 21215-3297 • (410) 580-5777

**CORNELL WILLIAM BROOKS**  
President & Chief Executive Officer

**LEON W. RUSSELL**  
Chairman, Board of Directors

## 1. ***NAACP Supports People of Puerto Rico in Their Call for Statehood***

**WHEREAS**, since 1898 the island of Puerto Rico has been an unincorporated territory of the United States, which means the island is neither a state nor independent country; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1917 Puerto Ricans were granted American citizenship, although since Puerto Rico does not enjoy full U.S. statehood, Puerto Ricans residing on the island cannot vote for President nor do they have voting representation in Congress; and

**WHEREAS**, as of the 2010 Census, 75.8% of Puerto Ricans identify as white, 12.4% identify as black, 0.5% as Amerindian, 0.2% as Asian, and 11.1% as "mixed" or other. Although estimates vary, most sources estimate that about 46% of Puerto Ricans have significant African ancestry. The vast majority of blacks in Puerto Rico are Afro-Puerto Rican, meaning they have been in Puerto Rico for generations, usually since the slave trade, forming an important part of Puerto Rican culture and society; and

**WHEREAS**, plebiscites regarding the status of Puerto Rico were held in 1967, 1993, 1998, 2012 and 2017; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 11, 2017, a plebiscite which offered voters three options: statehood, independence/free association, or "current territorial status" (the last option was added at the request of the Trump administration) was held; and

**WHEREAS**, those who voted in the June 2017 referendum entitled "Plebiscite for the immediate decolonization of Puerto Rico" overwhelmingly chose "statehood": the results were 97.18% for statehood, 1.5% for independence / free association, and 1.32% for current territorial status; and

**WHEREAS**, an independent opinion poll conducted by one of the daily newspapers conducted in late May 2017, indicates that the majority of Puerto Ricans favor statehood; and

**WHEREAS**, it is now up to the U.S. Congress to determine whether the island of Puerto Rico should be admitted to the union as a state; and

**WHEREAS**, similar to the situation in the District of Columbia, statehood for Puerto Rico is now a civil rights issue as the majority of the people have said that they want the core voting and citizenship rights that come with statehood.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) joins the majority of Puerto Ricans and its government in supporting U.S. statehood for the island nation; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the NAACP calls on the United States Congress to grant U.S. statehood to Puerto Rico, with all the democratic rights and responsibilities which go along with that status to its population.

**PASSED BY THE NAACP DELEGATES TO THE 2017 NATIONAL CONVENTION**

*July 25, 2017*

*Baltimore, Maryland*

**RATIFIED BY THE NAACP NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*October 21, 2017*

*Arlington, Virginia*