

A recent island wide poll conducted by a nationally recognized opinion research firm amongst 800 likely voters in the U.S territory shows a continuing trend of support for Statehood, when compared with previous polls conducted over the years. The environment for a statehood campaign and for New Progressive Party (PNP for its Spanish acronym) candidates is extremely favorable as we move towards the 2016 election year.

### ***Fiscal Control Board***

In the midst of the fiscal crisis a majority of Puerto Ricans support the creation of a Fiscal Control Board. 68% support it while 20% oppose it, with 11% not sure. As to the approval of the Fiscal Control and its members, 65% believe it should be by the United States Congress.

### ***The economy***

The issue of the economy dominates voters' concerns. Fully 82% of voters say Puerto Rico is heading on the wrong direction.

Voters give very negative ratings to the strength of the economy and are pessimistic it will improve. Consider these numbers...

- 87% of voters state that buying groceries has become a major burden, 95% say the same about medical expenses, and;
- 56% think the sales tax ("IVU") should be lowered back to 7%.

The Puerto Rican government is increasingly blamed for economic conditions. Currently, 53% of voters blame the Puerto Rican government and 18% blame the world economy. Three years ago, in 2012, it was the opposite—41% blamed the world economy and 27% blamed the Puerto Rican government.

### ***Political leaders and parties***

In the NPP primary race, Resident Commissioner Pedro Pierluisi continues to build his lead against his opponent Ricky Rossello with 46% supporting Pierluisi against 38% who support Rossello with 15% not sure. If the elections were held today both NPP candidates would defeat PDP candidate, former Secretary of State David Bernier. Pedro Pierluisi leads Bernier 38% to 22%, while Rossello leads Bernier 31% to 25%.

In the race for resident Commissioner Jenniffer Gonzalez holds a comfortable lead. In the NPP primaries the former Speaker leads Carlos Pesquera 65% to 23%. On the PDP side, former Party President Hector Ferrer leads State Senator Angel Rosa 51% to 30%. In a general election matchup Gonzalez leads Ferrer 45% to 27%.

### ***Statehood***

Voter support for statehood is at an all-time high. Contrary to what is traditionally projected by some media outlets, the issue of political status is important to voters in Puerto Rico. Two thirds of those interviewed, 65% of likely voters polled, answered that they favor seeking statehood for Puerto Rico.

- 70% of voters responded that the status issue is extremely or very important to them.
- In a three-way status plebiscite, 59% would pick statehood, 22% keeping current status, and 7% independence.

