

May 7, 2018

The Honorable Ricardo Rosselló  
Governor  
La Fortaleza  
P.O. Box 9020082  
San Juan, PR 00902-0082

Dear Governor Rosselló,

We, the undersigned organizations, write to respectfully urge you to keep Puerto Rico's statistical agency, El Instituto de Estadísticas de Puerto Rico (Puerto Rico Institute of Statistics, PRIS), and its board of directors fully independent.

At this critical historical juncture, Puerto Rico needs accurate, objective, and timely statistics. Government statistics empower the economy, serve the health and welfare of citizens, improve governance, and inform decisions and policies in the public and private sectors, among many other vital functions. Government statistics are also fundamental to evidence-based policymaking, the engagement of which is on a rapid rise in local, state, and federal governments. To address the challenges posed by its decade-long economic recession and the devastation of back-to-back hurricanes, Puerto Rico must chart its path toward sustainable recovery using reputable and reliable data and statistical methods.

Because of their broad and profound importance, it is imperative that government statistics be produced through rigorous scientific processes and analyses performed by experts that can function free of outside influence. Government statistics must be independent, objective, accurate, and timely and be perceived as such. PRIS has demonstrated repeatedly it has the expertise to function independently and produce rigorous, objective, and accurate statistics for the benefit of Puerto Rico and its people.

The alternative to objective and accurate statistical data to inform decisions is reliance on judgement, which of course can differ widely by individual and one's perspective. However, in a highly regarded study on the topic of expert judgement versus a relatively statistical approach, the latter was found to be more reliable.<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, we draw your attention again to the petition now signed by 3,000 individuals—and still growing—urging a strong and independent PRIS.<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://hbr.org/2015/02/what-research-tells-us-about-making-accurate-predictions>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.change.org/p/puerto-rico-legislature-and-governor-ricardo-rosselló-put-the-facts-first-governor-rosselló-for-a-better-puerto-rico>

## 500 Women Scientists

American Anthropological Association  
American Association for the Advancement of Science  
American Association of Geographers  
American Educational Research Association  
American Geophysical Union  
American Institute of Biological Sciences  
American Phytopathological Society  
American Political Science Association  
American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
American Society for Cell Biology  
American Society of Hispanic Economists  
American Sociological Association  
American Statistical Association  
Applied Demography Program, Pennsylvania State University  
Asociación Latinoamericana de Población  
Association of Population Centers  
Association of Public Data Users  
Center for Open Science  
Ciencia Puerto Rico  
Consortium of Social Science Associations  
Council for Community and Economic Research  
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics  
Future of Research  
Inter American Statistical Institute  
International Association for Official Statistics  
International Statistical Institute  
Latin American Observatory of Population Censuses  
March for Science Puerto Rico  
McDougall Scientific Ltd.  
National Association for Business Economics  
National Statistical Institute  
Population Association of America  
Population Specialty Group, American Association of Geographers  
Puerto Rico Association of Economists  
Puerto Rico Chapter of the American Statistical Association  
Puerto Rico Society of Microbiologists, American Society for Microbiology - Local Branch  
Rescuing Biomedical Research  
Royal Statistical Society  
Sense About Science USA  
SocArXiv: Open Archive for the Social Sciences  
Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)  
Society for Research in Child Development  
Statistical Society of Australia  
Statistical Society of Canada / Société statistique du Canada

The International Environmetrics Society  
Union of Concerned Scientists

*Identical versions of this letter were sent to The Honorable Carlos J. Méndez Nuñez and The Honorable Thomas Rivera Schatz. Contact for this letter is American Statistical Association Director of Science Policy Steve Pierson: [pierson@amstat.org](mailto:pierson@amstat.org).*