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tú Decides – Un Periódico Bilingüe

Vol. 11 No. 24

8220 W. Gage Blvd., #715, Kennewick, WA 99336

www.TuDecidesMedia.com

June 16th, 2017



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NATIONAL

Puerto Rican voters back statehood in questioned referendum

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)

Puerto Rico's governor announced that the U.S. territory overwhelmingly chose statehood on Sunday in a nonbinding referendum held amid a deep economic crisis that has sparked an exodus of islanders to the U.S. mainland.

Nearly half a million votes were cast for statehood, about 7,600 for free association/independence and nearly 6,700 for the current territorial status, according to preliminary results. Voter turnout was just 23 percent, leading opponents to question the validity of a vote that several political parties had urged their supporters to boycott.

And the U.S. Congress has final say in any changes to Puerto Rico's political status.

But that didn't stop Gov. Ricardo Rossello from vowing to push ahead with his administration's quest to make the island



In this January 2, 2017, file photo, pro-statehood supporters await the arrival of Puerto Rico's governor at the Capitol in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

the 51st U.S. state and declaring that "Puerto Rico voted for statehood." He said he would create a commission to ensure that Congress validate the referendum's results.

"In any democracy, the expressed will of the majority that participates in the

electoral processes always prevails," Rossello said. "It would be highly contradictory for Washington to demand democracy in other parts of the world, and not respond to the legitimate right to self-determination that was exercised today in the American territory of Puerto Rico."

It was the lowest level of participation in any election in Puerto Rico since 1967, according to Carlos Vargas Ramos, an associate with the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College in New York. He also said that even among voters who supported statehood, turnout was lower this year compared with the last referendum in 2012.

"Supporters of statehood did not seem enthusiastic about this plebiscite as they were five years ago," he said.

Puerto Rico's main opposition party rejected the pro-statehood result.

"The scant participation ... sends a clear message," said Anibal Jose Torres, a party member. "The people rejected it by boycotting an inconsequential event."

The referendum coincides with the 100th anniversary of the United States granting U.S. citizenship to Puerto Ricans, though they are barred from voting in presidential elections and have only one congressional representative with limited voting powers.

Among those hoping Puerto Rico will become a state is Jose Alvarez, a 61-year-old businessman.

"Now is the moment to do it," he said. "We've spent a lot of years working on a socioeconomic model that has not necessarily given us the answer."

Many believe the island's territorial status has contributed to its 10-year economic recession, which has prompted nearly half a million Puerto Ricans to flee to the U.S. mainland and was largely sparked by decades of heavy borrowing and the elimination of federal tax incentives.

Puerto Rico is exempt from the U.S. federal income tax, but it still pays Social Security and Medicare and local taxes and receives less federal funding than U.S. states.

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Subscriptions

Subscriptions are available for \$26 for 6 months

tú Decides is published weekly by tú Decides Media Inc. on every Friday. News deadline is every Monday at 12 p.m. Ad reservation deadline is Monday at 10 a.m., ad material deadline is every Monday at noon.

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STATE

Rallies against Islamic law draw counter-protests in Seattle and across US

SEATTLE, Washington (AP)

Demonstrations against Islamic law Saturday in cities across the U.S. drew counter-protests by people who said they stoked unfounded fears and a distorted view of the religion.

Hundreds marched through downtown Seattle, banging drums, cymbals and cowbells behind a large sign saying "Seattle stands with our Muslim neighbors." Participants chanted "No hate, no fear, Muslims are welcome here" on their way to City Hall, while a phalanx of bicycle police officers separated them from an anti-Shariah rally numbering in the dozens.

In front of the Trump building in downtown Chicago, about 30 people demonstrated against Islamic law and in favor of President Donald Trump, shouting slogans and holding signs that read "Ban Sharia" and "Sharia abuses women." About twice as many counter-protesters marshaled across the street.

A similar scene played out in a park near a New York courthouse, where coun-

ter-protesters sounded air-horns and banged pots and pans in an effort to silence an anti-Shariah rally.

"The theme of today is drowning out racism," said counter-protester Tony Murphy, standing next to demonstrators with colorful earplugs. "The more racists get a platform, the more people get attacked."

In St. Paul, Minnesota, the demonstrations were mostly peaceful until some people leaving a rally inside the Capitol encountered counter-protesters outside.

A confrontation that included shoving



Cathy Camper, of Tacoma, Washington wears a stars-and-stripes cowboy hat as she protests against Islamic law at a rally on Saturday, June 10, 2017, in Seattle, as counter-protesters demonstrate across the street.

dozen U.S. cities, were organized by ACT for America, which claims Islamic law is incompatible with Western democracy.

The organization said it opposes discrimination and supports the rights of those subject to Shariah. However, the Southern Poverty Law Center, which tracks hate groups, calls it the largest American anti-Muslim group.

"I don't believe Islam can peacefully co-exist with the Constitution," said Seattle anti-Shariah demonstrator Aaron Bassford, 29. "I'm not going to tell them they can come here and take away my Second Amendment right. We need unity in this country under no ideology and no banner except the Constitution of the United States of America."

and punching occurred, The Star Tribune reported. The Minnesota State Patrol separated the groups and appeared to make at least one arrest.

The rallies, held in more than two

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POLITICS

Another court keeps Trump's travel ban blocked

SEATTLE, Washington (AP)

Another U.S. appeals court upheld a decision blocking President Donald Trump's revised travel ban Monday, dealing the administration another legal defeat as the Supreme Court considers a separate case on the issue.

The ruling from a unanimous three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said the president violated U.S. immigration law by discriminating against people based on their nationality and by failing to demonstrate that their entry into the country would hurt American interests.

"Immigration, even for the president, is not a one-person show," the judges said. "The president's authority is subject to certain statutory and constitutional restraints."

It keeps in place a decision by U.S. District Judge Derrick Watson in Hawaii that he based largely on Trump's campaign statements calling for a "complete and total shutdown" of Muslims entering the U.S.

Watson ruled that the true purpose



In this May 15, 2017, file photo, protesters hold signs during a demonstration against President Donald Trump's revised travel ban outside a federal courthouse in Seattle, Washington.

of the temporary ban on travel from six mostly Muslim nations was to discriminate against Islam — not to protect national security. That violated the Constitution's prohibition on the government officially favoring or disfavoring any religion, he said.

The 9th Circuit judges said they didn't need to reach the constitutional question

because the travel ban violated immigration law, and thus wasn't allowed.

The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Virginia also ruled against the travel ban May 25, citing the president's campaign statements as evidence that the 90-day ban is "steeped in animus and directed at a single religious group." The administration has appealed that ruling to the Supreme

Court.

The high court is considering a request to reinstate the policy and could act before the justices wind up their work at the end of June.

Trump issued his initial travel ban on a Friday in late January, bringing chaos and protests to airports around the country. A Seattle judge blocked its enforcement nationwide in response to a lawsuit by Washington state — a decision that was unanimously upheld by a different three-judge 9th Circuit panel.

The president then rewrote his executive order rather than appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court at that time. The new version, designed to better withstand legal scrutiny, named six countries instead of seven — Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen, with Iraq dropped — and spelled out more of a national security rationale.

In March, the judge in Honolulu blocked the new version from taking effect, citing what he called "significant and un rebutted evidence of religious animus" in Trump's campaign statements.

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IMMIGRATION

Old deportation orders are reactivated under Trump

LOS ANGELES, California (AP)

For years, immigrants facing deportation have been allowed to stay in the U.S. provided they show up for regular check-ins with federal deportation agents and stay out of trouble. After a brief meeting, they're usually told to return months later to check in again.

Now, in cases spanning from Michigan to California, some of these immigrants are being told their time here is up.

Immigrants who already have deportation orders and were allowed to stay in the country under the prior administration have become a target under President Donald Trump's new immigration policies, with some getting arrested on the spot during check-ins with officers. Such arrests have dismayed family members and sent chills through immigrant communities.

In other instances, immigrants have been fitted with ankle-monitoring bracelets. Others have been released much like they were during President Barack Obama's administration in what immigration attorneys say appears to be a random series of

decisions based more on detention space than public safety.

"Everywhere, people going in to report are just absolutely terrified," said Stacy Tolchin, a Los Angeles immigration attorney.

Agents still consider requests to delay deportations at immigrants' regularly scheduled check-ins if, for example, someone has a medical condition, said David Marin, who oversees enforcement and removal operations for Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Los Angeles. But decisions are made on an individual basis, and efforts are being stepped up to procure travel documents from foreign countries to send people back home.

"They still have the ability to file a stay, but again, we're looking at it in a different light," Marin said. "There has to be an end game here."

Immigration and Customs Enforcement said it is tracking nearly 970,000 immigrants with deportation orders. The majority — 82 percent — have no criminal record,



In this May 16, 2017, file photo, Torianto Johnson, a freshman at Pioneer High School in Ann Arbor, Michigan, holds a sign supporting immigrants during a rally outside a federal courthouse in Detroit.

the agency said. ICE declined to say how many must regularly report to authorities or are tracked by ankle monitors, and it is unclear how many are being arrested.

Trump boosted immigration arrests by 38 percent in the early days of his administration, but deportations fell from a year ago as activity on the U.S.-Mexico border slowed.

For authorities keen on showing they're beefing up immigration enforcement, immigrants who already have deportation orders are seen as an easy target. They can be

removed from the country more quickly than newly arrested immigrants, whose cases can drag on for years in immigration court proceedings and appeals.

"I just assume they figure this is an easy removal. All we have to do is deport this person, and that adds to our numbers of people who are out of the United States," said Heather Prendergast, chair of the American Immigration Lawyers Association's National Immigration and Customs Enforcement Liaison Committee.

Many immigrants with old deportation orders have lived in the United States for years and — despite having no legal status — set down roots here, which deportation agents were known to weigh to decide who was a priority for removal.

In Michigan, Jose Luis Sanchez-Ronquillo reported to authorities for more than four years before he was arrested at an April check-in and sent to a Louisiana detention facility. The 36-year-old father of two came into contact with police during a traffic stop and lost his immigration case in 2012. But he was then repeatedly allowed to stay, said Shanta Driver, his lawyer.

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IMMIGRATION

After almost 30 years in the US, man must leave in 30 days

HONOLULU, Hawaii (AP)

A Hawaii coffee farmer who entered the United States illegally from Mexico nearly three decades ago has been granted a 30-day reprieve on a deportation order.

Andres Magana Ortiz, 43, must return to the country he left at 15 if efforts to halt his deportation aren't successful, said his lawyer, James Stanton.

Magana Ortiz was ordered to have a bag packed and turn himself to a U.S. Department of Homeland Security office in Honolulu Thursday morning.

"He's agreed to leave voluntarily at his own expense," Stanton said after they met with immigration officials for several hours. "They understand that we're working on other channels to get a stay and they'll respect that if we get it. If are unable to get it, he understands that he'll go back to Mexico."

Magana Ortiz's case gained attention after a 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals judge criticized the Trump administration's order to deport him. "Presi-

dent Trump has claimed that his immigration policies would target the 'bad hombres,'" Judge Stephen Reinhardt said in an opinion issued last week. "The government's decision to remove Magana Ortiz shows that even the 'good hombres' are not safe."

However, Reinhardt said the 9th Circuit lacked authority to block the deportation order.

"The last week was very stressful," Magana Ortiz said. "I have a little bit of relief."

He is hoping something can be worked



Hawaii coffee farmer Andres Magana Ortiz speaks to reporters in Honolulu on Thursday, June 8, 2017.

out before his 30 days are up. Hawaii's congressional delegation intervened earlier this week with a letter to Homeland Security urging the deportation to be halted. They're also asking that his U.S. citizen wife's petition for his perma-

nent residency be expedited.

U.S. Sen. Mazie Hirono said she spoke with Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly and asked him to exercise his discretionary authority to allow Magana Ortiz to stay in Hawaii.

"This morning, Mr. Ortiz faced the possibility of immediate deportation, leaving his wife and three children behind," U.S. Rep. Tulsi Gabbard said in a statement. "While today's 30-day reprieve is a positive step, it does not resolve the underlying issues. I'll continue to push other avenues to assist Mr. Ortiz and his family in their efforts to remain in the Kona community he has called home for nearly three decades."

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LATIN AMERICA

Merkel speaks against walls during Mexico visit

MEXICO CITY (AP)

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has said during a state visit to Mexico that countries should focus on improving life for people fleeing their homes rather than building walls.

Merkel spoke Saturday in response to a question about migration. She was speaking of Europe's handling of migrants from Africa and Syria, but while being in Mexico the parallels to U.S. President Donald Trump's call to wall the entire U.S.-Mexico border were unavoidable.

Merkel has been an outspoken advocate of more generous migrant policies in Europe. She says countries must work against what causes people to abandon their homes.

The U.S. Congress denied Trump's



Mexico's President Enrique Pena Nieto, left, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel speak during a meeting at the National Palace in Mexico City, on Friday, June 9, 2017.

initial request of \$2.6 billion to begin building a stretch of border wall. His first full budget requests \$1.6 billion for about 74 miles of new and replacement wall.

Merkel also said she spoke with Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto about two of the country's touchiest sub-

jects: journalist murders and widespread disappearances.

The German leader says she was pleased to hear about steps to protect journalists. Six have been killed in Mexico so far this year.

In a joint news conference in Mexico City on Friday, Merkel said she expected meetings about Great Britain's exit from the European Union to begin within days of that country forming a new government.

Both leaders expressed optimism about the upcoming renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement demanded by President Donald Trump. Pena Nieto says he hopes a "global" agreement between Mexico and the European Union could be finalized by year's end.

Merkel was in Mexico on a two-day visit.

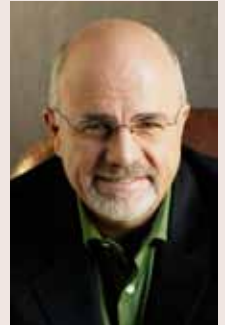
Dave Says

To file, or not to file?

Dear Dave,

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— Ben



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Somehow, lots of people get the idea they can make money on insurance process. You don't. Insurance companies make money, and consumers pay insurance companies. You don't make money on insurance in the long-term. You may have a situation, once in a blue moon, where you come out ahead on a transaction versus what you paid in. But over the scope of your life, you don't make money on insurance companies.

The point is this: If you turn in the claim, you're going to experience a rate increase or cancellation somewhere — at some point — that offsets it. I only turn in substantial claims, meaning claims that are far above the deductible.

— Dave

* Dave Ramsey is CEO of Ramsey Solutions. He has authored seven best-selling books, including *The Total Money Makeover*. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 13 million listeners each week on 585 radio stations and multiple digital platforms. Follow Dave on the web at daveramsey.com and on Twitter at @DaveRamsey.

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LATINOAMÉRICA

Cuba encuentra nuevos aliados dentro de EEUU

LA HABANA, Cuba (AP)

Los amigos que tenía Cuba en Estados Unidos solían ser una mezcla de politólogos e izquierdistas que enviaban autobuses escolares y computadoras donadas a la isla.

Pero cinco meses después de la asunción del presidente Donald Trump, los cubanos cuentan con más aliados: una coalición de empresas de alta tecnología, agencias de viaje y cubano-estadounidenses jóvenes que se están movilizando ante el cambio de política hacia Cuba que se anunciaría en cualquier momento. Del otro lado algunos sectores del exilio cubano en Miami, que repentinamente tienen una línea directa hacia la Casa Blanca a través de funcionarios y legisladores republicanos de origen cubano.

Trump planeaba anunciar la nueva política el viernes en Miami, pero todavía faltaban ultimar algunos detalles, según un funcionario de la Casa Blanca que pidió permanecer anónimo para hablar de deliberaciones internas del gobierno.

La embajada de Estados Unidos en La

Habana permanecería abierta, pero se anticipan medidas de los departamentos de Estado, Tesoro y Seguridad Nacional que impedirían hacer negocios con toda entidad cubana vinculada con los militares. Se contempla asimismo una reducción en la cantidad de categorías que no requieren licencias del gobierno estadounidense para ir a Cuba. Estados Unidos, por otro lado, exigiría mayor acceso a la internet, la liberación de presos y la entrega de fugitivos estadounidenses que se encuentran en la isla. No se restablecería la política de pies mojados/pies secos que dejó sin efecto Barack Obama, por la cual todo cubano que pisase tierra firme estadounidense podía quedarse.

“Si este fuese un clima político tradicional, estaríamos teniendo un gran éxito”, declaró Collin Laverty, director de una agencia de viaje que trabaja con Cuba y consultor de firmas estadounidenses que quieren hacer negocios en la isla. “Sin duda estamos ganando el debate ante la opinión pública y los círculos de política exterior, pero lamentablemente parece que todo girará en torno a un acuerdo político entre bambalinas, entre el presidente y los miembros cubano-



El presidente estadounidense Donald Trump habla durante una reunión con senadores republicanos en la Casa Blanca el martes 13 de junio del 2017.

estadounidenses del Congreso”.

Las figuras más prominentes que todavía intentan dar marcha atrás con la apertura iniciada por Obama son el senador Marco Rubio y el representante Mario Díaz-Balart, ambos de ascendencia cubana. El gobierno de Trump quiere mantener buenas relaciones tanto con Rubio, que integra la comisión del Senado que investiga las relaciones de Trump con Rusia, como con Díaz-Balart, miembro de la poderosa Comisión de Asignaciones Presupuestarias de la cámara baja.

Laverty es una de las figuras más promi-

nentes del nuevo lobby a favor de Cuba, que ha estado difundiendo numerosos tuits y escribiendo cartas a la Casa Blanca en un esfuerzo de último momento por tratar de convencer al gobierno de Trump de los beneficios que tiene la mejoría en las relaciones impulsada por Obama a partir del 17 de diciembre del 2014. De particular interés es preservar las facilidades para viajar de Estados Unidos a Cuba.

“Miles de estadounidenses están visitando Cuba e impulsando el crecimiento del sector privado más grande que se registra desde 1959”, señaló CubaOne, un grupo de cubano-estadounidenses jóvenes a favor de una mejoría en las relaciones entre Washington y La Habana, en una carta enviada el lunes a Trump.

Luego de meses de silencio público, Airbnb difundió la semana pasada un informe sobre sus actividades en Cuba, que pusieron 40 millones de dólares en manos de propietarios privados de viviendas y hosterías desde que la empresa pasó a ser la primera firma estadounidense importante que incursiona en Cuba tras el deshielo iniciado por Obama.

LATIN AMERICA

Cuba finds new allies within the US

HAVANA, Cuba (AP)

Cuba's best friends in the U.S. used to be a smattering of Washington policy wonks and leftists who sent donated school buses and computers to the communist-led island.

Five months into the Trump administration, Cuba has a new set of American defenders: a coalition of high-tech firms, farming interests, travel companies and young Cuban-Americans thrown into action by the looming announcement of a new Cuba policy. On the opposite side, hardline members of Miami's Cuban exile community who suddenly have a direct line into the White House through Cuban-American Republican members of Congress and the administration.

President Donald Trump planned to announce the new policy on Friday in Miami but had not yet decided all the details, according to a White House official who spoke on condition of anonymity in order to discuss internal delibera-

tions.

The U.S. Embassy in Havana will remain open, but Americans can expect actions by the departments of State, Treasury and Homeland Security to ban U.S. trade with any Cuban entity linked to the military. Also planned: a reduction in the number of categories for which Americans do not need U.S. government licenses to go to Cuba. The U.S. will demand greater internet access and the release of prisoners and return of American fugitives in Cuba. President Barack Obama's repeal of the special Cuban immigration privileges known as wet-foot/dry-foot will not change, the official said.

“If this were a traditional policy environment, we'd be having great success,” said Collin Laverty, head of one of the biggest Cuba travel companies and a consultant for U.S. corporations seeking business in Cuba. “We're certainly winning the debate for public opinion and in foreign policy circles, but unfortunately it appears that it'll come down to a back-



US President Donald Trump speaks during a meeting with Republican senators at the White House on Tuesday, June 13, 2017.

room political deal between the president and Cuban-American members of Congress.”

The most prominent figures still seeking a reversal in the opening are Sen. Marco Rubio and Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart, both Cuban-Americans. The Trump government wants to maintain good relations with both Rubio, who sits on the Senate committee investigating Trump's relations with Russia, and Diaz-Balart, a member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee.

Laverty is one of the most prominent

figures in the new pro-Cuba lobby, which has been furiously tweeting and writing letters to the White House in a last-minute rush to sell the Trump administration on the benefits of the friendly relations established by President Barack Obama on Dec. 17, 2014. A particular focus is saving Obama's easing of U.S. travel to Cuba, which tripled the number of American travelers to the island and pumped tens of millions of dollars into the island's private hospitality sector.

“Thousands of Americans are visiting Cuba and fueling the fastest growth in its private sector since 1959,” CubaOne, a group of young pro-engagement Cuban-Americans, wrote in an open letter to Trump Monday.

After months of public silence, Airbnb last week released a report on its activities in Cuba, which have put \$40 million into the hands of private bed-and-breakfast owners since the online lodging giant became the first major U.S. company into Cuba in the wake of Obama's declaration of detente.