

OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

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As leaders of local and nation-wide Cuban American organizations, we would like to share some background information on our community that you may find useful in reaching out to potential voters.

- The U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate have voted with decisive majorities to ease the Cuban embargo. For the fourth consecutive time, the lifting of travel restrictions to Cuba gained wide-margin vote majorities in the U.S. Congress. Numerous polls show that the majority of Americans and the majority of Cuban-Americans support an end to restrictions on Cuba travel. In a recent poll in Miami-Dade, 68 percent of Cuban Americans agreed that Cubans on the island should decide when and if their political system should change. A majority of Cuban-Americans have shifted away from a hard line stance and have deep suspicion of politicians who play the Cuba card to curry votes.
- Most Cuban-Americans would not reject new policy initiatives with respect to Cuba. We are traveling to Cuba and sending money remittances in record numbers. In polls conducted by the Miami Herald, the South Voters Registration Project, and moderate groups of Cuban Americans, the vast majority (77% in some cases) of Cuban Americans in South Florida under the age of 45 would be more likely to vote for a candidate who would work to change U.S. policy toward Cuba to allow more trade and travel, as opposed to one who did not.
- The U.S. has been isolated in its 44-year old embargo policy of Cuba. The lack of substantive changes in President Bush's policy toward Cuba, insofar as it affects Cuban-Americans, reflects opinion changes taking place in our community. Even the Cuban American National Foundation—the foremost pro-embargo voice since cradled into existence by the Administration of President Ronald Reagan—is promoting a policy of partial engagement.

Lifting the Cuban embargo would send a message of confidence in our own American ideals. The time has come to reach out to new voices in the Cuban American community and permit us to focus not on the wounds of the past but on our common hopes for a brighter future.

Respectfully,

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO DOWNLOAD THIS LETTER, CONTACT
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