



For Immediate Release

CarABE releases statement on comments made about Puerto Rico

November 3, 2024

In response to the recent offensive remarks directed at Puerto Rico, the Carolina Association for Bilingual Education (CarABE) stands in solidarity with the people of Puerto Rico, ASPIRA, and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and vehemently rejects derogatory terminology associated with the island and its people. CarABE urges all leaders to acknowledge and respect the profound cultural contributions of Puerto Rico and its people. We reinforce the value of Puerto Rican heritage and emphasize the importance of multilingualism.

CarABE asserts:

Puerto Rico's political status as a U.S. territory denies its residents full citizenship rights despite their U.S. citizenship status. Navigating this relationship makes bilingualism essential for accessing opportunities and asserting cultural identity.

The growing Puerto Rican community, especially in the Carolinas, underscores the need for bilingual education. Bilingual Puerto Rican teachers are vital for creating culturally affirming spaces that empower students to embrace their heritage and thrive in an unequal sociopolitical landscape.

Language is not just a cultural aspect but a practical tool in overcoming Puerto Ricans' archipelago and mainland economic challenges. Bilingual skills are critical to educational and professional advancement.

CarABE is committed to honoring Puerto Rico's linguistic and cultural richness while equipping students to navigate the complexities of their identity and status. We stand with the Puerto Rican community in celebrating their resilience, advocating for their rights, and building an education system that values their whole selves. Bilingualism fosters a powerful path to empowerment and equity and motivates us to continue our advocacy work.

We call for a renewed commitment to respectful dialogue, acknowledging the invaluable contributions that Puerto Ricans bring to the United States every day. Moving forward, CarABE supports initiatives and policies that empower Puerto Rico, allowing its people to thrive and continue their remarkable impact.

