

CUBA STUDY GROUP

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CUBA STUDY GROUP CALLS ON THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO DE-CODIFY THE CUBAN EMBARGO AND EXPAND THE FREE FLOW OF RESOURCES AND INFORMATION TO THE CUBAN PEOPLE

Washington, DC – Today the Cuba Study Group released a whitepaper titled: “**Restoring Executive Authority Over U.S. Policy Toward Cuba,**” calling on the U.S. Government to de-codify the Cuban embargo via the repeal of Helms-Burton and related statutory provisions that deny the United States the flexibility to respond swiftly and strategically to developments in Cuba as they take place. The document also outlines a series of immediate measures the Executive can take under existing licensing authority to secure and expand the free flow of resources and information to the Cuban people.

“De-codifying the embargo would allow the Executive Branch the flexibility to use the entire range of foreign policy tools at its disposal—including diplomatic, economic, political, legal and cultural—to incentivize change in Cuba. The President would be free to adopt more efficient, targeted policies necessary for pressuring the Cuban leadership to respect human rights and implement political reforms, while simultaneously empowering all other sectors of society to pursue their economic wellbeing and become the authors of their own futures,” reads the document.

The call is the first of its kind by a leading Cuban exile organization in that it recognizes that Helms-Burton has failed to secure international sanctions or advance the cause change in the Island, and is now having the unintended effect of delaying the very economic and political changes it sought to advance.

“This failed policy has only isolated the United States from Cuba and continues to provide the Cuban leadership with a reliable excuse for its economic blunders and human rights abuses. Worst of all, it is now stifling an emerging class of private entrepreneurs and democracy advocates whose rise represents the best hope for a free and open society in Cuba in over 50 years,” stated Carlos Saladrigas, the Group’s chairman.

“We must shift the focus of our policy away from obsessing with hurting the Cuban regime and toward obsessing with helping the Cuban people. It’s what Cuban civil society leaders have been asking us to do for years and what proved to work in Eastern Europe. Let’s empower the Cuban people with the tools, resources and capital necessary to develop a robust civil society that can foster and sustain long-lasting change,” stated Saladrigas.

The whitepaper also recommends eleven measures the Executive Branch can take immediately to safeguard the flow of resources and information into the Island, encourage greater independent economic and political activity, and further empower Cuban civil society. Among these measures is the provision of licenses for the import and export of goods and services between the United States and private entrepreneurs in Cuba.

The whitepaper can be found on the Group’s website: www.CubaStudyGroup.org.

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Our group is made up of business and community leaders with a deeply rooted love for Cuba and the Cuban people. We aim to put our collective experience in leadership skills, problem solving, and wealth creation at the service of the Cuban people to facilitate change, help empower individuals and promote civil society development.

Our mission is to help facilitate a peaceful transition in Cuba leading to a free and open society, respect for human rights and the rule of law, a productive, market-based economy and the reunification of the Cuban nation.

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