

# *U.S. Senators Urge Washington to Lift Blockade of Cuba*

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Havana, February 11 (RHC)-- U.S. Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy and Republican Senator Jeff Flake have urged Washington to lift its over-50-year economic, commercial and financial blockade of Cuba.

According to an article published by The Miami Herald, the legislators said: "Americans want a change in our Cuba policy. The president should heed the majority of those across the country who recognize that we have much to gain by jettisoning this relic of the Cold War."

The two senators quoted a recent survey by the Atlantic Council's Latin America Center, making clear the contrast between the current attitude of the U.S. people to the blockade of Cuba and Washington's outdated policy in relation to the island.

Flake and Leahy point to the solid majority of Americans across every state and party lines in support of normalizing relations with Cuba.

In Florida, with the largest Cuban-American population, the Atlantic Council's survey found large support for the normalization of relations, some 63%, while at the national level the figure was calculated at 56%.

The senators said: "We are in the fifth decade -- more than half a century -- of our country's embargo toward Cuba. During that time, the Soviet Union has ceased to exist. Apartheid in South Africa has ended. We have re-established diplomatic relations with the Communist governments of China and Vietnam. Still, the United States refuses to reexamine the political and economic embargo on Cuba."

The article in the Miami Herald says it is the United States that is becoming isolated and points to the recent visits to Cuba by U.S. allies, such as the presidents of Colombia and Mexico, both of whom attended the Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States last month in Havana.

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