

100TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2849

To provide for referenda and the development of enabling legislation regarding incorporation of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico into the Union as a State.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 30, 1987

Mr. LAGOMAESINO (for himself, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. COLEMAN of Missouri) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs

A BILL

To provide for referenda and the development of enabling legislation regarding incorporation of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico into the Union as a State.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. PURPOSE.**

4 The Congress, having received over a quarter of a mil-
5 lion individually signed petitions for statehood for Puerto
6 Rico from United States citizens residing therein, recognizes
7 that permanent political union and full constitutional repre-
8 sentation has only been achieved through statehood and un-
9 derstands the desires of the people of Puerto Rico to seek

1 incorporation into the Union as a State, while preserving
2 their cultural identity. Therefore, it is the purpose of this Act
3 to provide for a referendum to ascertain the nonpartisan de-
4 sires of the people of Puerto Rico to join the rest of their
5 fellow United States citizens in permanent union, and there-
6 by enjoying a complete endowment of their constitutional
7 rights with full participation. It is further the purpose of this
8 Act to establish an appropriate mechanism for the develop-
9 ment of enabling legislation for the admission of Puerto Rico
10 to the Union.

11 **SEC. 2. REFERENDUM.**

12 (a) **QUESTION.**—The Government of Puerto Rico shall
13 conduct a referendum on the following question, to be pre-
14 sented in both English and Spanish:

Shall the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico be incorporated into the
Union as a State, upon the people of Puerto Rico and Congress mu-
tually agreeing to the terms of admission?

Debe el Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico ser incorporado a la
Union como Estado, al llegar a un acuerdo mutuo el pueblo de
Puerto Rico y el Congreso sobre las condiciones de admision?

15 The referendum shall be held in the eighteenth month follow-
16 ing the next general elections, according to the election laws
17 of Puerto Rico.

18 (b) **REIMBURSEMENT.**—The Executive Director of the
19 White House Task Force on Puerto Rico shall reimburse the
20 Government of Puerto Rico for all proper expenses of the
21 referendum.

1 SEC. 3. JOINT TASK FORCE.

2 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—If a referendum is approved
3 under section 2 by a majority of the legal votes cast, a Joint
4 Task Force on the Incorporation of the Commonwealth of
5 Puerto Rico into the Union as a State shall be established.
6 Within 60 days of the approval of such referendum, the
7 President shall appoint 8 members to the Joint Task Force, 4
8 of whom shall be nominated by the Governor of Puerto Rico.
9 One of the members shall be designated by the President to
10 serve as Chairman. The Joint Task Force shall develop tran-
11 sition recommendations and shall propose the necessary ena-
12 bling legislation. The Joint Task Force shall cease to exist
13 not later than 60 days after submitting proposed enabling
14 legislation and recommendations to the Governor and the
15 President.

16 (b) **ENABLING LEGISLATION AND RECOMMENDA-**
17 **TIONS.**—The Joint Task Force shall transmit the proposed
18 enabling legislation and recommendations to the Governor
19 and the President for review and comment within 12 months
20 from the date on which the Joint Task Force is appointed.

21 (c) **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.**—The Executive Di-
22 rector of the White House Task Force on Puerto Rico shall
23 provide all necessary administrative support to the Joint
24 Task Force established under this section and shall pay all
25 necessary expenses of the Joint Task Force to accomplish
26 the requirements of this section.

1 **SEC. 4. REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS.**

2 Within 60 days after receiving the recommendations
3 and proposed enabling legislation from the Joint Task Force,
4 the President shall transmit those documents to the Congress
5 for consideration, together with comments of the President
6 and any comments received from the Governor of Puerto
7 Rico.

8 **SEC. 5. APPROVAL.**

9 (a) **REFERENDUM OF APPROVAL.**—Upon the passage
10 of an Act by the Congress providing for the admission of
11 Puerto Rico to the Union, the Governor shall expeditiously
12 call a referendum to be held according to the election laws of
13 Puerto Rico, in order for the people of Puerto Rico to decide
14 if they approve of the terms of permanently joining the Union
15 as a State.

16 (b) **MAJORITY APPROVAL.**—Approval of a majority of
17 the legal votes cast in the referendum shall be a necessary
18 prerequisite for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to be ad-
19 mitted into the Union as a State.

20 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

21 Effective beginning with fiscal year 1989, there are au-
22 thorized to be appropriated to the President for use by the
23 White House Task Force on Puerto Rico such sums as are
24 necessary to defray the costs of the referendum under section
25 2. There are also authorized to be appropriated to the Presi-
26 dent for use by the White House Task Force on Puerto Rico

1 such sums as are necessary to provide administrative support
2 for the Joint Task Force, to pay other necessary expenses of
3 the Joint Task Force, and to defray the cost of the referen-
4 dum under section 5.

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