

113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2020

To set forth the process for Puerto Rico to be admitted as a State of
the Union.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 12, 2014

Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) introduced the following bill;
which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Nat-
ural Resources

A BILL

To set forth the process for Puerto Rico to be admitted
as a State of the Union.

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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Puerto Rico Status
5 Resolution Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

8 (1) in 1898, Puerto Rico became a United
9 States territory and persons born in Puerto Rico

1 have been granted United States citizenship by law
2 since March 2, 1917;

3 (2) Puerto Rico has been granted authority
4 over local matters that is similar to the authority
5 that the several States possess, but Puerto Rico re-
6 mains subject to the powers of Congress under the
7 Territory Clause of the Constitution of the United
8 States;

9 (3) the approximately 3,700,000 residents of
10 Puerto Rico do not have a democratic form of gov-
11 ernment at the national level, because—

12 (A) United States citizens residing in the
13 territory—

14 (i) are disenfranchised in the election
15 for the President and the Vice President;

16 and

17 (ii) are not represented in the United
18 States Senate; and

19 (B) the 1 representative of United States
20 citizens residing in the territory in the House of
21 Representatives can only vote in committees of
22 the House of Representatives;

23 (4) the Federal Government may, and often
24 does, treat Puerto Rico and residents of Puerto Rico
25 unequally under Federal program, tax, and other

1 laws relative to the several States and the District
2 of Columbia and residents;

3 (5)(A) on November 6, 2012, the Government
4 of Puerto Rico held a 2-part referendum;

5 (B) the first question asked voters if Puerto
6 Rico “should continue to have its present form of
7 territorial status”; and

8 (C) of the 1,798,987 voters who chose an op-
9 tion, 53.97 percent voted against continued terri-
10 torial status;

11 (6)(A) the second question asked voters to ex-
12 press their preference among the 3 possible alter-
13 natives to territorial status: statehood, independence,
14 and nationhood in free association with the United
15 States; and

16 (B) of the 1,363,854 voters who chose an op-
17 tion, 61.16 percent voted for statehood; and

18 (7) the number of votes cast in favor of state-
19 hood exceeded the number of votes cast in favor of
20 continued territorial status.

21 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

22 (1) to provide for a federally authorized ratifi-
23 cation vote in Puerto Rico on the admission of Puer-
24 to Rico into the Union as a State; and

1 (2) if a majority of voters ratify the desire of
2 Puerto Rico for statehood, to describe the steps that
3 the President and Congress shall take to enable the
4 admission of Puerto Rico as a State of the Union.

5 **SEC. 3. RATIFICATION VOTE.**

6 The State Elections Commission of Puerto Rico is
7 authorized to provide for a ratification vote on the admis-
8 sion of Puerto Rico into the Union as a State, in accord-
9 ance with rules and regulations determined by the Com-
10 mission, including qualifications for voter eligibility, with
11 the following on the ballot:

12 “As a State:

13 “(A) Puerto Rico would be permanently
14 united to the other States of the Union.

15 “(B) All provisions of the Constitution of
16 the United States that apply to the States
17 would apply to Puerto Rico.

18 “(C) Individuals born in Puerto Rico
19 would be United States citizens by virtue of the
20 Constitution of the United States, instead of by
21 virtue of laws of the United States.

22 “(D) Puerto Rico would be treated equally
23 with the other States in all Federal laws of gen-
24 eral application.

1 “(E) There would be a period of transition
2 to statehood, during which equal treatment of
3 Puerto Rico in program and tax laws would be
4 phased in.

5 “(F) Puerto Rico would be represented—

6 “(i) in the Senate by 2 Senators;

7 “(ii) in the House of Representatives
8 by a number of Representatives in propor-
9 tion to its share of the national population
10 (and the number of Members of the House
11 of Representatives would be increased by
12 the same number); and

13 “(iii) for the election of the President
14 and the Vice President by a number of
15 votes in the Electoral College equal to the
16 number of its Senators and Representa-
17 tives.

18 “(G) The Government of Puerto Rico, like
19 the governments of the other States, would
20 have permanent authority over all matters not
21 delegated to the Federal Government or the
22 people by the Constitution of the United States.

23 Do you want Puerto Rico to be admitted as a State
24 of the United States? Yes _____ No _____”.

1 **SEC. 4. IMPLEMENTATION.**

2 (a) **PRESIDENTIAL ACTION.**—If a majority of votes
3 cast in the ratification vote held under section 3 are for
4 the admission of Puerto Rico as a State of the Union,
5 the President, not later than 180 days after the certifi-
6 cation of the vote, shall submit to Congress legislation to
7 admit Puerto Rico as a State of the Union on an equal
8 footing with the several States in all respects, consistent
9 with the terms of this Act.

10 (b) **LEGISLATIVE ACTION.**—If a majority of votes
11 cast in the ratification vote held under section 3 are for
12 the admission of Puerto Rico as a State of the Union,
13 this Act constitutes a commitment by Congress to act,
14 through legislation, to admit Puerto Rico as a State of
15 the Union on an equal footing with the several States in
16 all respects, consistent with the terms of this Act.

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