

88TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 5948

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 30, 1963

MR. FERNÓS-ISERN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs

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## A BILL

To establish a procedure for the prompt settlement, in a democratic manner, of the political status of Puerto Rico.

1        *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2        *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*  
3        That duly recognizing the inherent right and juridical capac-  
4        ity of the people of Puerto Rico to govern themselves and  
5        to establish such relationships with the Government of the  
6        United States as are freely agreed upon, the Congress takes  
7        note of joint resolution numbered 1 of the Legislative Assem-  
8        bly of Puerto Rico, approved December 3, 1962, which  
9        proposes to the Congress the prompt settlement, in a demo-  
10       cratic manner, of the political status of Puerto Rico and

1 hereby establishes the United States-Puerto Rico Compact  
2 Commission.

3       SEC. 2. The Commission shall be composed of twelve  
4 members of whom the President of the United States and  
5 the Governor of Puerto Rico shall each appoint four and  
6 the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of  
7 Representatives of the Congress shall each appoint two.

8       The Commission shall draft a proposed compact of per-  
9 manent union between the Government of the United States  
10 and the people of Puerto Rico in the light of the principles  
11 expressed by the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico in said  
12 joint resolution numbered 1, namely: (a) "the recognition  
13 and reassertion of the sovereignty of the people of Puerto  
14 Rico"; (b) "the permanence and irrevocability of the union  
15 between the United States and Puerto Rico on the basis of  
16 common citizenship, common defense, common currency, free  
17 market, common loyalty to the values of democracy, and of  
18 such other conditions as may be considered, in the compact,  
19 of mutual benefit to the United States and Puerto Rico";  
20 (c) the specific definition of the powers of the United States  
21 with respect to Puerto Rico and the reservation of all other  
22 powers to the people of Puerto Rico; and (d) participation  
23 by the people of Puerto Rico in the powers exercised, under  
24 the compact, by the Government of the United States, in  
25 matters affecting Puerto Rico, in a measure proportional to

1 the scope of such powers and the adoption of a formula under  
2 which the people of Puerto Rico will contribute, in a manner  
3 compatible with the stability and economic growth of Puerto  
4 Rico, to the general expenses of the United States Govern-  
5 ment.

6 The Commission shall render its report to the President  
7 and the Congress and to the Governor and the Legislative  
8 Assembly of Puerto Rico.

9 SEC. 3. (a) Any member of the Commission who is not  
10 an officer or employee of the Government of the United  
11 States or the government of Puerto Rico shall be paid \$50  
12 per day for his services while actually engaged on Commis-  
13 sion business, and all members shall be entitled to reimburse-  
14 ment for actual travel and reasonable subsistence expenses  
15 incurred in connection with their service on the Commission.

16 (b) The Commission is authorized to appoint and fix  
17 the compensation of an Executive Secretary and such ad-  
18 ditional personnel as may be necessary to enable it to carry  
19 out its functions without regard to the civil service laws and  
20 regulations, but any Federal employee subject to those laws  
21 who may be detailed to the Commission (which detail is  
22 hereby authorized) shall retain his civil service status without  
23 interruption or loss of status or privilege.

24 (c) The Commission is authorized to call upon the head  
25 of any Federal department or agency to furnish, and the

1 heads of such departments and agencies are authorized to  
2 furnish without reimbursement, information and assistance  
3 which the Commission finds necessary for the performance of  
4 its functions.

5       SEC. 4. Costs incurred by the Commission shall be  
6 shared equally by the United States and Puerto Rico. There  
7 are hereby authorized to be appropriated such sums, but not  
8 more than \$           , as may be necessary to pay the United  
9 States share of such costs.

10       SEC. 5. The President is hereby authorized to enter, on  
11 behalf of the United States, into a compact with the people  
12 of Puerto Rico upon fulfillment of the following conditions:

13       (a) Adoption of legislation by Congress, after the re-  
14 ceipt of the report of the Commission, authorizing a new  
15 compact.

16       (b) Ratification of such compact by the people of Puerto  
17 Rico by a majority of the votes cast in a referendum to be  
18 held for such purpose, pursuant to the laws of the Common-  
19 wealth of Puerto Rico, which laws shall also have provided  
20 for submission to the people, as alternatives to ratification  
21 of the compact, of proposals to apply for statehood and for  
22 independence: *Provided*, That if a majority of the voters  
23 participating in such referendum should favor either of such  
24 two alternatives submitted to them instead of the Common-  
25 wealth status as proposed to be amended, upon the result of

1 the referendum being certified by the Governor of Puerto  
2 Rico to the President, the President shall transmit such cer-  
3 tification to the Congress of the United States for such action  
4 as it may consider appropriate.

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By Mr. FERNÓS-ISERN

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