



To: House Committee on Natural Resources Republican Members
From: House Committee on Natural Resources Republican Staff
Date: July 18, 2022
Subject: Hybrid Markup of 5 bills: H.R. 6353, H.R. 6438, H.R. 6799, H.R. 7618, and H.R. 8393

The Natural Resources Committee will hold a hybrid markup on **Wednesday, July 20, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. EDT** in room 1324 Longworth House Office Building and via Cisco WebEx. The bills to be considered include H.R. 6353 (Wild), H.R. 6438 (Buck), H.R. 6799 (Wenstrup), H.R. 7618 (Brown), and the amendment in the nature of a substitute (ANS) to H.R. 8393 (Grijalva).

Republican Members are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to participate in person and vote electronically from the hearing room.

Member offices are requested to notify Will Layden (Will.Layden@mail.house.gov) and Baylee Seeman (Baylee.Seeman@mail.house.gov) no later than **4:30 p.m. EDT on Tuesday, July 19, 2022**, if their Member intends to participate in person in the hearing room or remotely via his/her laptop from another location. Members may vote either by electronic device in the hearing room or by voice (while visible) if participating remotely.

Submissions for the hearing record must be submitted through the Committee's electronic repository at HNRCDocs@mail.house.gov. Please contact David DeMarco (David.DeMarco@mail.house.gov) or Everett Winnick (EverettWinnick@mail.house.gov) should any technical difficulties arise.

I. KEY MESSAGES

- Bills expected to move by regular order are the ANS to H.R. 8393, the *Puerto Rico Status Act* (Grijalva).
- Bills expected to move by unanimous consent are H.R. 6353, the *National Service Animals Memorial Act* (Wild), H.R. 6438, the *Dearfield Study Act* (Buck), H.R. 6799, the *John P. Parker House Study Act* (Wenstrup), and H.R. 7618, *to designate the Kol Israel Foundation Holocaust Memorial in Bedford Heights, Ohio, as a national memorial* (Brown).

- H.R. 8393 has not gone through regular order. The Chair introduced this bill just before noticing the markup and is rushing it to markup rather than holding a hearing. The bill has significant implications for national sovereignty, elections, government benefits, taxation, immigration, and other issues outside the jurisdiction of the Committee on Natural Resources.
- H.R. 8393 would create an entirely new process for statehood and abrogate congressional authority by authorizing a self-executing, federally sponsored plebiscite for residents of Puerto Rico to choose between statehood, independence, and sovereignty in free association with the United States.
- H.R. 8393 would continue to provide the federal benefits and U.S. citizenship to the residents of the nation of Puerto Rico even if Puerto Rico voted for independence or free association. Federal entitlement benefits that are unique to U.S. citizenship should not be given to sovereign nations, unless negotiated pursuant to treaty or compacts of free association.
- Puerto Rico is still in the process of restructuring its multi-billion dollar debt. While the *Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act* (PROMESA, Pub. L. 114-87) has allowed Puerto Rico and the PROMESA Financial Oversight Board (FOMB) to make good progress on resolving the debt, much remains to be done to place Puerto Rico on a stable financial footing.

II. EXPECTED LEGISLATION

H.R. 6353 (Wild), National Service Animals Memorial Act

H.R. 6353 would authorize the National Service Animals Monument Corporation to create a commemorative work on federal land in Washington, D.C., to honor the heroic acts and sacrifices of service animals and their handlers. The commemorative work would highlight the contributions of many animals that have helped humans throughout history by serving as guides for those with disabilities and providing support to law enforcement, search and rescue, and military personnel.¹

Some notable examples of heroic service animals include Cairo, who was part of the Navy SEAL team that killed Osama bin Laden, and Conan, a dog honored by President Trump for his role in the raid that led to the death of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.² Other animals to be honored by this this commemorative work could include service horses, donkeys, mules, cats, homing pigeons, sea lions, and dolphins.³

¹ National Service Animals Monument, “Monument Animals,” Accessed June 30, 2022, <https://nationalserviceanimalsmonument.org/monument-animals/>.

² New York Post, “Inside story of Cairo, the dog that helped catch Osama bin Laden,” Maureen Callahan, Apr. 16, 2020, <https://nypost.com/2020/04/16/inside-story-of-cairo-the-dog-that-helped-catch-osama-bin-laden/>.

CBS News, “Conan, hero dog injured in al-Baghdadi raid, honored at White House,” Kathryn Watson, Nov. 25, 2019, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/conan-hero-dog-injured-in-al-baghdadi-raid-honored-at-white-house/>.

³ National Service Animals Monument, “Monument Animals,” Accessed June 30, 2022, <https://nationalserviceanimalsmonument.org/monument-animals/>.

H.R. 6353 would require the National Service Animals Monument Corporation to follow the standards established by the Commemorative Works Act (CWA, 40 U.S.C. ch. 89) to ensure the work is appropriately designed, sited, and constructed. The bill would also prohibit the use of federal funds to create or maintain the commemorative work. Earlier this year, two Senate companion bills, S. 3438 and S. 3447, were introduced by Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT). At a legislative hearing held on July 14, 2022, the National Park Service (NPS) testified in support of H.R. 6353.

Hearing information, including testimony, may be viewed [here](#) and the hearing memo may be viewed [here](#). *The Ranking Member supports the bill, and it is expected to move by unanimous consent.*

Staff contacts: Aniela Butler (Aniela@mail.house.gov) or Terry Camp (Terry.Camp@mail.house.gov)

H.R. 6438 (Buck), Dearfield Study Act

In 1910, Oliver Toussaint Jackson established Dearfield, the largest black homesteading settlement in Colorado.⁴ The Dearfield agricultural settlement, located roughly 70 miles northeast of Denver, reflected Jackson's beliefs, inspired by Booker T. Washington, that land ownership and agriculture were necessary for the future prosperity of African Americans.⁵ Jackson established the Negro Townsite and Land Company to develop the colony, which he modeled after the nearby Union Colony (now known as Greeley, Colorado). After receiving support from Colorado Governor John F. Shafroth, Jackson obtained 320 acres for his colony.⁶

By 1911, the Dearfield townsite was home to seven black families.⁷ These first few settlers experienced many hardships within the first year of the colony's establishment, including being unable to afford to ship their belongings from Denver or erect a building in which to live.⁸ However, aided by higher prices for agricultural products spurred by the onset of World War I, the town flourished and developed into a community consisting of 27 families.⁹ Unfortunately, the toll of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl left just 12 residents in the town by 1940, with the final resident leaving Dearfield in 1973.¹⁰

⁴ National Park Service, "Dearfield Colorado," Nov. 2, 2021, <https://www.nps.gov/places/dearfield-colorado.htm>

⁵ Colorado Encyclopedia, "Oliver Toussaint Jackson," Accessed June 29, 2022, <https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/oliver-toussaint-jackson>.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Colorado State University Public Lands History Center, "Dearfield: Colorado's (Almost) Forgotten Black Ghost Town," Kristy Ornelas, Mar. 9, 2022, <https://publiclands.colostate.edu/2022/03/dearfield-colorados-almost-forgotten-black-ghost-town/>.

¹⁰ Colorado Preservation, "Dearfield Colony," Accessed June 30, 2022, <http://coloradopreservation.org/programs/endangered-places/endangered-places-archives/dearfield-colony/>.

In 1955, NPS listed Dearfield on the National Register of Historic Places.¹¹ There are three remaining buildings at the site, all in varying states of disrepair. These buildings include a gas station, a diner, and the former home of Oliver Toussaint Jackson.¹² Currently, the site is jointly managed by the Black American West Museum and the University of Northern Colorado.¹³

In 2010, Anadarko Petroleum Corporation and Greeley Monument Works donated a historical marker to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the town.¹⁴ Aside from this marker, no other evidence of the town's importance to African American history exists onsite. In November of 2021, Representative Buck (R-CO-04) and Chair Neguse (D-CO-02) jointly requested a NPS reconnaissance survey of the Dearfield town site to determine whether it would likely meet the criteria for addition to the National Park System.

H.R. 6438 would direct the Department of the Interior (DOI) to conduct a special resource study of Dearfield, Colorado. The study would evaluate the national significance of the site and determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the study area as a unit of the National Park System. At the legislative hearing on July 14, 2022, NPS testified in support of H.R. 6438.

Hearing information, including testimony, may be viewed [here](#) and the hearing memo may be viewed [here](#). *The Ranking Member supports the bill, and it is expected to move by unanimous consent.*

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H.R. 6799 (Wenstrup), John P. Parker House Study Act

John P. Parker was born into slavery in 1827 in Norfolk, Virginia, and at age eight was purchased by a doctor in Mobile, Alabama.¹⁵ The doctor's family taught Parker to read and write and allowed him to work in an iron foundry, where he was paid and allowed to keep some of his earnings. At age 18, Parker purchased his freedom and moved to southern Ohio.¹⁶ The house where he lived in Ripley, Ohio, from approximately 1853 until his death in 1900 served as a stop on the Underground Railroad and allowed many slaves to escape from the Kentucky side of the Ohio River.¹⁷ Parker also established a foundry where he created numerous inventions, made

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.*

¹³ Colorado Public Radio News, "Dearfield Was a Booming Black Community A Century Ago. Now There's a Renewed Push To Preserve The Ghost Town That Remains," Bentine Birkeland, July 27, 2021, <https://www.cpr.org/2021/07/27/dearfield-colorado-black-history-preservation/>.

¹⁴ National Park Service, "National Park Service awards \$15 million to help preserve African American civil rights history," July 27, 2021, <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1207/07-27-21-nps-awards-15-million-to-help-preserve-african-american-civil-rights-history.htm>.

¹⁵ National Park Service, "Aboard the Underground Railroad, John P. Parker House," Accessed June 30, 2022, <https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/underground/oh2.htm>.

¹⁶ John P. Parker Museum & Historical Society, "Facts," Accessed June 30, 2022, <https://johnparkerhouse.net/facts/>.

¹⁷ *Id.*

iron castings for the Union during the Civil War, and became one of the first African Americans to receive a U.S. patent.¹⁸

The NPS listed John P. Parker’s house on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 and later designated the house as a National Historic Landmark in 1997.¹⁹ The house is currently owned and managed by the John P. Parker Historical Society.²⁰

H.R. 6799 would direct the Secretary of the Interior to complete a special resource study of the John P. Parker House to evaluate its national significance and assess the suitability and feasibility of establishing it as a unit of the National Park System. In 2020, an NPS reconnaissance survey of the John P. Parker House determined that “further evaluation through a congressionally authorized special resource study is warranted.”²¹ At the legislative hearing on July 14, 2022, NPS testified in support of H.R. 6799.

Hearing information, including testimony, may be viewed [here](#) and the hearing memo may be viewed [here](#). *The Ranking Member supports the bill, as amended, and it is expected to move by unanimous consent.*

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H.R. 7618 (Brown), To designate the Kol Israel Foundation Holocaust Memorial in Bedford Heights, Ohio, as a national memorial

The Kol Israel Foundation Holocaust Memorial pays tribute to the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust and is located at Zion Memorial Park in Bedford Heights, Ohio.²² The Memorial, dedicated in May 1961, is one of the first Holocaust commemorative works in the U.S. and is surrounded by walls with the names of those who died in the Holocaust as well as survivors who later passed away.²³ The ashes of Jewish martyrs killed by Nazis from three concentration camps are also buried at the base of the Memorial.²⁴

H.R. 7618 would designate this existing memorial as a national memorial. The bill specifies that the national memorial would not be considered a unit of the National Park System and would not permit any federal funds to maintain the national memorial. At the legislative hearing on July 14, 2022, NPS testified that they did not have a position on the legislation, as the memorial is not located on NPS land, and the legislation does not provide for any NPS management or funding.

¹⁸ Statement of Michael A. Caldwell, Associate Director, Park Planning, Facilities, and Lands, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, “S. 3685, A Bill to Direct the Secretary of the Interior to Conduct a Special Resources Study to Determine the Suitability and Feasibility of Establishing the John P. Parker House in Ripley, Ohio as a Unit of the National Park System,” May 11, 2022, <https://www.doi.gov/ocl/s-3685>.

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ *Id.*

²¹ *Id.*

²² Cleveland Historical, “Kol Israel Memorial,” Accessed July 6, 2022, <https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/871>.

²³ Kol Israel Foundation, “Memorial & Commemoration,” Accessed July 6, 2022, <https://kifcle.org/memorial>.

²⁴ *Id.*

Hearing information, including testimony, may be viewed [here](#) and the hearing memo may be viewed [here](#). *The Ranking Member supports the bill, and it is expected to move by unanimous consent.*

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[ANS to H.R. 8393](#) (Grijalva), Puerto Rico Status Act

The ANS to H.R. 8393 would authorize a federally sponsored plebiscite to occur on November 5, 2023, for the voters of Puerto Rico to choose from three status options: independence, sovereignty in free association, and statehood. Titles I through III of the bill establish the processes by which transition in status could occur.

History and Background

Following U.S. victory in the Spanish-American War in 1898, the United States acquired Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines from Spain.²⁵ Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory subject to Congressional authority derived from the Territory Clause of the U.S. Constitution.²⁶ The Territory Clause grants Congress the “[p]ower to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States.”²⁷

Individuals born in Puerto Rico are U.S. citizens. Residents of Puerto Rico lack full voting representation in Congress and do not vote in the Presidential general election. In addition, only those who earn income outside of Puerto Rico pay federal income taxes. Residents of Puerto Rico do not have the same eligibility for some federal programs as those in the states.²⁸

Puerto Rico has held several plebiscites, or direct votes of all voters on the island of Puerto Rico on the question of the territory’s statehood. However, there has never been a plebiscite to determine independence. Under current law, if Congress chose to alter Puerto Rico’s political status, it could do so through statute regardless of whether a plebiscite was held or which political status prevailed in such a vote.²⁹

²⁵ “Chronology of Puerto Rico in the Spanish-American War” *Library of Congress*. <https://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/1898/chronpr.html>.

²⁶ U.S. Const., Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2.

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ Congressional Research Service, *Political Status of Puerto Rico* (June 12, 2017), <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/R44721.pdf>.

²⁹ U.S. Const., Article IV, Section 3, Clause 1

Bill Analysis

Plebiscite Procedure

H.R. 8393 would require a plebiscite to be held on November 5, 2023, with three choices: independence, sovereignty in free association with the United States, or statehood. There would be no option to remain as a U.S. territory. A majority of eligible voters, who must be bona fide residents of Puerto Rico, would choose one of the three options. If an option fails to receive a majority in favor, a runoff plebiscite would take place on March 3, 2024, between the two options that received the most votes. Over 50 percent of valid votes is required for any option to go into effect.

H.R. 8393 prescribes exact ballot language for the plebiscite, including descriptions of each of the three status options and information about tax implications of each status option.

H.R. 8393 would require the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission to conduct a voter education campaign about the plebiscite with information about implications each of the three status options. The bill gives the Department of Justice (DOJ) oversight over the ballot design and the nonpartisan voter education materials. DOJ is authorized to request changes if they deem it necessary.

The whole plebiscite process, including the voter education campaign, initial plebiscite, and (if necessary) the runoff plebiscite, would be federally funded and implemented by the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission. Any of the existing \$2.5 million set aside for such purpose from the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014* (Pub. L. 113-76) would be authorized to be used for these efforts.³⁰

H.R. 8393 would terminate the duties of the Financial Oversight Board (FOMB) created by PROMESA once Puerto Rico certifies any of the three status options, regardless of the status of Puerto Rico's current debt.³¹ Funds, property, and assets of the FOMB would be transferred to either the state or nation of Puerto Rico.

Title I: Independence

H.R. 8393 would create a process for independence that includes establishment of a constitutional convention, ratification of a new constitution, election of a government, and transition through a Joint Transition Commission.

If the plebiscite is certified for independence, then Puerto Rico would elect delegates to a constitutional convention to write a constitution for the nation of Puerto Rico. The constitution would then be submitted to the people of Puerto Rico for ratification. Once the constitution was ratified, the voters of Puerto Rico would elect government officials. The new status of Puerto Rico would be made effective through a presidential proclamation. A Joint Transition

³⁰ P.L. 113-76.

³¹ 48 U.S.C. 2101 et seq.

Commission would be established to determine how the functions of the U.S. federal government relating to Puerto Rico would be transferred to the nation of Puerto Rico.

H.R. 8393 would allow Puerto Rico to choose to be independent but continues to prescribe how the independent and sovereign nation should conduct its processes. Should Puerto Rico choose to be independent it would be an unprecedented interference for the U.S. to dictate the subsequent actions of a new sovereign nation. Further, there are no assurances that the newly independent nation would choose to take the actions prescribed in the legislation, such as honor past judicial rulings or include protections for human rights in its constitution, nor is there any realistic enforcement mechanism on the part of the United States if the newly sovereign nation chooses not to take these actions.

This process is also mirrored in Title II to implement the sovereignty in free association status option.

Title II: Sovereignty in Free Association with the U.S.

Free association is a status created after World War II when the United States was ceasing its administration of United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.³² Three Pacific Island nations, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau signed Compacts of Free Association with the United States, choosing free association rather than U.S. territorial or commonwealth status.³³ These bilateral compacts generally detail how much U.S. economic assistance each Freely Associated State (FAS) receives and also grants the United States the prerogatives to operate military bases on their soil and make decisions that affect mutual security.³⁴ Generally these compacts are reevaluated every 15 to 20 years.

Under H.R. 8393, the process for Puerto Rico to implement sovereignty in free association with the United States would include establishing a constitutional convention, electing a government, and transitioning through a Bilateral Negotiation Commission. This process is similar to the process Puerto Rico would follow under Title I.

The Bilateral Negotiating Commission would be responsible for negotiating a free association compact between the United States and the newly created nation of Puerto Rico, including transitioning government functions. The compact would then have to be approved by Puerto Rico through ratification and by the United States through an Act of Congress signed by the President.

³² Congressional Research Service, *The Freely Associated States and Issues for Congress* (Oct. 7, 2020) <https://www.crs.gov/Reports/R46573>.

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ *Id.*

Title III: Transition and Implementation – Statehood

If the plebiscite is certified for statehood, H.R. 8393 would require the President of the United States to issue a proclamation admitting Puerto Rico to the Union as a state. The state would have the same land and islands currently under the territory of Puerto Rico’s jurisdiction.

Puerto Rico would then elect Representatives and Senators according to the state and U.S. constitution. The State of Puerto Rico would be entitled to the same number of Representatives as the State whose most recent Census population was closest to Puerto Rico’s population.³⁵ Based on Census data, that state would likely be Utah, which currently has 4 seats in the House of Representatives.³⁶ In this scenario, Puerto Rico would receive four Representatives, which would temporarily increase the total membership of the House of Representatives to 439 voting members until the next reapportionment. At the next reapportionment the membership of the House would decrease back to 435 voting members. Reapportionment usually occurs following each decennial census and also triggers a redrawing of Congressional District boundaries, the most recent reapportionment occurred following the 2020 census.³⁷ If, following Puerto Rico statehood, the total membership of the House were reduced back to 435 Representatives, it is likely that several states would lose seats as Puerto Rico’s new representation is absorbed into the makeup of the House.³⁸

The State of Puerto Rico would also have two Senators, increasing the number of the body by two to 102. The system of temporarily increasing the number of Senators and Representatives is how new states have been added to the Union previously, most recently with Hawai’i and Alaska.

Concerns

Citizenship

H.R. 8393, includes several citizenship and immigration clauses under Titles I & II if Puerto Rico chooses independence or free association.

If voters choose independence:

- U.S. citizenship would not be granted at birth to children born in Puerto Rico after the date of independence to at least one parent who was granted U.S. citizenship under Section 302 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1402).
 - Section 302 gave all residents of Puerto Rico U.S. citizenship and added Puerto Rico to the places where U.S. citizenship was granted by birth.

³⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, Puerto Rico (April 1, 2020) <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/72/POP010220>.

³⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, Utah (July 1, 2021) <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/UT/PST045221>

³⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, *Computing Apportionment* (Nov. 22, 2021) <https://www.census.gov/topics/public-sector/congressional-apportionment/about/computing.htm>

³⁸ CNN Politics, Here’s What Would Happen to US Politics if Puerto Rico Became a State (Oct. 14, 2017) <https://www.cnn.com/2017/10/14/politics/puerto-rico-state-congress-white-house/index.html>

- Citizens of the new nation of Puerto Rico would retain travel and work authorization benefits for 25 years.

If voters choose Sovereignty in Free Association with the United States:

- During the implementation of the first Articles of Free Association, an individual born in Puerto Rico to two parents who are citizens of the U.S. shall be a U.S. citizen at birth under subsection (c) of section 301(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, if otherwise eligible.
- After the first Articles of Free Association, an individual born in Puerto Rico after the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association to at least one parent who became a U.S. citizen under section 302 of the Immigration and Nationality Act is not a U.S. citizen at birth.

Currently, citizens of the Freely Associated States (FAS), such as Micronesia and Palau, can reside and work in the United States and its territories as lawful non-immigrants or habitual residents, but they are not considered Lawful Permanent Residents or U.S. Citizens.³⁹

Continuation of U.S. Federal Benefits under Independence and Free Association

H.R. 8393 would allow federal benefits to continue to Puerto Rico in three ways: individual benefits, a Social Security payout to the nation of Puerto Rico, and 20 years of block grants for federal programs currently benefiting Puerto Rico.

Individual benefits that are vested in citizens of the new nation of Puerto Rico that result from services or contributions through service in the U.S. Armed Forces, to government retirement plans, and benefits from old age, disability, or survivors' insurance benefits under the Social Security Act would continue until the benefits extinguish under U.S. law.

For Social Security, any payments into the system by employees or employers who reside in Puerto Rico would be paid out to the nation of Puerto Rico to establish their own social security program. The bill provides that these funds can only be used for this purpose, though there is no realistic mechanism for the United States to ensure funds will be used for this purpose once the payment is made from the Treasury to the sovereign nation of Puerto Rico.

Any other federal benefits Puerto Rico or its citizens currently receive would be packaged together in a block grant to be sent to Puerto Rico annually for 10 years. The amount of the block grant would then decrease by 10 percent over the next 10 years, so that the United States would not be paying Puerto Rico a block grant on the 21st year of independence.

Regular Order

While the Committee has held hearings on two other Puerto Rico status bills during the 117th Congress (H.R. 1522 and H.R. 2070), H.R. 8393 is an entirely new legislative proposal that has not had a legislative hearing. The final text of the bill was only introduced on the morning of

³⁹ Congressional Research Service, *The Freely Associated States and Issues for Congress* (Oct. 7, 2020) <https://www.crs.gov/Reports/R46573>.

Friday, July 15, 2022. The Committee has not considered many of the provisions and effects of the legislation including, whether the provisions that may bind a future foreign government are valid or enforceable, what the costs of the bill are, concerns surrounding block grants of federal funds to a new foreign nation, and what effect this may have on Puerto Rico's debt crisis, to name a few.

Additionally, the less than 1 week timeline between the legislation's introduction and scheduled markup does not provide sufficient time for a Congressional Budget Office cost analysis of the legislation's impacts on federal spending and revenues.

Self-Execution

The Territory Clause gives Congress plenary control over the territories.⁴⁰ However, H.R. 8393, is self-executing and binding to the status option that is chosen through the prescribed plebiscite. Congress will not have final approval over the decision, which abrogates Congressional authority and its Constitutionally granted role to oversee the territories.

Debt

By the end of 2021, the FOMB established by PROMESA had completed assisting Puerto Rico in restructuring \$33 billion in debt down to \$7 billion, serving as the largest municipal debt restructuring in the history of the U.S. The FOMB is still working to restructure \$9 billion in debt held by the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA) and \$3 billion in debt held by the Puerto Rico Highway Authority. While steps have been taken to ensure Puerto Rico is healthy fiscally, there is still work to be done, and it is unclear if the current fiscal policy is healthy and sustainable for a new nation or a new state.

The Ranking Member opposes the bill, and it is expected to move by regular order.

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III. CBO SCORES

None available.

IV. EFFECT ON CURRENT LAW (RAMSEYER)

None

⁴⁰ U.S. Const., Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2.