

Teague
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Yarmuth

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1332

Messrs. DAVIS of Illinois, CLAY, and BUYER changed their vote from "aye" to "no."

Messrs. GARAMENDI, DELAHUNT, ROTHMAN of New Jersey, RANGEL, CUELLAR, ENGEL, COSTELLO, ACKERMAN, NYE, FATTAH, STUPAK and Ms. SPEIER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. BALDWIN, and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD changed their vote from "no" to "aye."

So the motion to table was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REQUEST TO REDUCE TIME FOR
ELECTRONIC VOTING

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that votes for the remainder of the day be limited to 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will not entertain that request without proper consultation.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2499.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from West Virginia?

There was no objection.

PUERTO RICO DEMOCRACY ACT OF
2009

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1305 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2499.

□ 1334

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2499) to provide for a federally sanctioned self-determination process for the people of Puerto Rico, with Mr. SCHIFF in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall not exceed 1 hour and 30 minutes, with 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources and 30 minutes controlled by the gentleman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) or her designee.

The gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) each will control 30 minutes. The gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I have the privilege of representing the great State of West Virginia in this body, a State that was born amidst civil conflict in the middle of a war. It is said that West Virginia is the only State to be formed by seceding from a Confederate State during the Civil War. In fact, the western counties stayed loyal to the Union, while Tidewater seceded from it.

Puerto Rico also joined the American family as a result of war. In 1898, during the Spanish-American War, the island was invaded by the United States and was ceded by Spain to our country under the Treaty of Paris. The island's century-long history within the American family has been significant. Puerto Rico was one of the first areas outside the continental United States where the American flag was raised.

To the United States, it marked a milestone in our own political development. When once our Union of States was comprised of renegade English colonies, we then stepped into a role that we previously had fought against. Given our own experience, would anyone have imagined that our new colony would be disenfranchised and kept unequal in our own political framework? Our commitment to Puerto Rico's advancement under the 1898 Treaty of Paris should be our judge.

If our measure of success is today's Puerto Rico, then I state Puerto Rico has done well by the United States. It is a showcase of democracy in the Caribbean. Having some of the highest voter turnout rates in our Nation, Puerto Rico shames many of our own States with its energy and enthusiasm in electing its leaders. Economically, it is a powerhouse in the Caribbean and considered a home away from home for many mainland Fortune 500 companies.

Equal in importance to Puerto Rico's political and economic prowess is the island's contributions to our own social fabric. Every aspect of American art, music, theater, and sport has been influenced by Puerto Rico's own culture and its people. And beyond such contributions, there remains Puerto Rico's patriotism, beginning in World War I when thousands of Puerto Ricans served in the U.S. military. There is no doubt that many more thousands are currently serving in our Armed Forces, fighting our wars, and dying for our country.

To the families who have lost a husband, a father, a daughter or son in our wars, I take this moment, as we all do, to salute you. We can debate political status, but what is not subject of debate is the patriotism of the people of Puerto Rico.

We are here today on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives because, in spite of what we have gained from each other, there has been no ultimate achievement in Puerto Rico's political status, which really is the greatest commitment the U.S. has to all of our territories.

Since the establishment of the current Commonwealth status in 1952, four popular votes have been held on the status of Puerto Rico in three plebiscites and one referendum, but none of them were sanctioned by this body, the Congress of the United States.

Going back just to the 1970s, at least 40 separate measures have been introduced in Congress to resolve or clarify Puerto Rico political status. In addition, Congress has held at least 12 hearings, and four measures have received either House or Senate action.

During the last Congress, the Bush administration issued the President's Task Force Report on Puerto Rico's Status which served as the basis for the legislation before us today; a task force, I would point out, that was initiated by the Clinton administration and concluded by the Bush administration.

Indeed, the entire exercise has been bipartisan. The measure before us today is sponsored by the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico, PEDRO PIERLUISI, a Democrat. It is strongly supported by a former colleague and current Governor of Puerto Rico, the Honorable Luis Fortuno, a Republican. And it was reported out of our Natural Resources Committee by a vote of 30-8.

With this history before us, I join those who say it is time for Congress to provide the people of Puerto Rico with an unambiguous path toward permanently resolving its political status that is consistent with the U.S. Constitution.

When our Committee on Natural Resources considered similar legislation in the last Congress, we exhaustively examined the question of the constitutionality of the various status options available under the Constitution. And we continued that process during the current Congress. What emerged from that process was a clear consensus that settled on the permanent status options that are reflected in the bill before this body today.

The Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico is to be congratulated for carefully crafting a bill which seeks to authorize a fair, impartial, and democratic process for self-determination for the people of Puerto Rico. The pending measure is straightforward. It authorizes a plebiscite in which the two voting options are presented: number one, present political status; or number two, a different political status. If option two prevails, then a second plebiscite would be conducted in which three options are presented: independence, free association with the United States, or statehood. Puerto Rico would then certify the results to the President and the Congress.

Let me be very clear on this point. Nothing in this legislation prejudices the result of these plebiscites. Nothing in this legislation prejudices the result of these plebiscites. And voting for this legislation does not constitute a vote for the status quo, statehood, independence, or free association.

The bill is about a process, and depending upon what occurs during that process, it will be up to a future Congress to ultimately decide Puerto Rico's status.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, before I begin my remarks, I am getting requests for time on the floor from a number of Members, and there simply is not enough time allocated by the rule. So, Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that each person that is allocated time get an additional 15 minutes.

The CHAIR. The Chair cannot entertain that request in the Committee of the Whole.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to this bill. It strongly deviates from the procedures followed by other States to seek statehood, and it leaves numerous questions about the implications of statehood unanswered in this particular case.

H.R. 2499 is the wrong way to go about achieving statehood and breaks from the precedents set, as I mentioned, of other States and, most recently, those States that we entered into the Union in the last century, Alaska and Hawaii. Both of these States conducted their own vote on the question of statehood. When a strong majority voted in favor of statehood in each of these cases, it was only then that they went to Congress asking them to respond to that vote.

This bill has the process entirely backwards. This bill is a bill asking Puerto Rico if it wants to be a State, not the other way around. This is a dramatic departure from the long-established precedent of how other States sought admission to the Union.

□ 1345

This bill has Congress, as a result, blessing statehood before Puerto Rico even votes to express their will. Rather than receiving the request of statehood from a strong majority of the people of Puerto Rico, expressed through a locally initiated vote, this bill has Congressmen soliciting Puerto Ricans on the question of statehood.

Now, Mr. Chair, let me be very clear. I'm sympathetic to the people of Puerto Rico having the right and ability to vote on their own political future. But this bill is not—I want to repeat—not the only way that this can happen. In fact, this bill is not necessary for Puerto Rico to hold a self-determination vote. Puerto Rico can hold such a vote

right now, today, without any action of Congress. And they have done it three times in the past.

Furthermore, Congress is asking Puerto Rico if it wishes to be a State without a clear understanding of the implications of statehood and the conditions that would be required to join the Union. First, there is the question of what statehood would cost the U.S. taxpayers in increased Federal spending. We really don't know the answer to that, but we do think it is higher. And the reason for that is we asked CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, for information on that. And they have not provided an up-to-date analysis of the cost of statehood. So in an effort to somehow quantify the costs, my committee staff reviewed information by the Congressional Research Service. The spending on just 10 Federal programs, Mr. Chairman, would cost an estimated \$4.5 billion to \$7.7 billion per year. Now, that's only 10 programs. We put all of the other costs together, you can only imagine that it may be higher than that.

So before voting on this bill, I think that Members ought to know if there is a cost and what that cost would be. This information could be calculated, but it is not being done. Without this information, in my view, H.R. 2499 should not be passed.

Second, Mr. Chairman, there's a question of reapportioning House seats. According to CRS, based on a population of approximately 4 million people, if Puerto Rico were to become a State, it would be entitled, rightfully, to two Senate seats and six seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. Without increasing the size—435 Members of the House—States could lose an existing seat or not receive an additional seat after the 2010 Census. Again, this is according to CRS. Those States, by the way, Mr. Chairman, include Arizona, Missouri, New York, South Carolina, Texas, and my home State of Washington. The public deserves to know whether their State would lose representation to provide six of 435 House seats to Puerto Rico, or whether their proposed solution is that the Nation needs more Members of Congress. In other words, increase the number of Members from 435 to 440 or 441.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, there is the question of whether English should be the official language of Puerto Rico. When a similar bill was debated in the House in 1998, an amendment on the issue of English as the official language was allowed to be offered on the floor of this House and allowed to be debated. Unfortunately, this time the Democrat majority has blocked direct amendments on this issue. Currently, both Spanish and English are the official languages of Puerto Rico. However, as a practical matter, Puerto Rico is predominantly Spanish-speaking. Spanish is used in the state legislature, local courts, businesses, and in schools.

Now, during our history, the matter of the English language was addressed

during the admission of other States into the Union. And those States include Arizona, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and New Mexico. So I think it's only fair and appropriate to address and debate English as the official language in regard to statehood for Puerto Rico.

So, Mr. Chairman, we should not move forward with this bill until there are answers to those three issues, at least, that I have brought up. I think it would be more fair and more responsible to the residents and the 50 States and the people if we had answers to those questions before, and the conditions of statehood, rather than doing it before we have even gotten to that point.

So for those reasons, Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me just say that the gentleman from West Virginia, my colleague and friend, the chairman of the Natural Resources, is right. This is, Mr. Chairman, about process. It's about the fact that this is a flawed process. Not only was this bill drafted unilaterally, but it was prepared in a biased manner, with a predetermined outcome in mind.

Let us be clear. This legislation is designed to push the statehood agenda, regardless of whether that agenda is the best solution for the island or even among the people. The chairman of the Natural Resources Committee also mentioned that four plebiscites have been held in Puerto Rico. Yes, he is correct. In the past three plebiscites, the men and women of Puerto Rico have consistently voted in favor of Commonwealth status and against statehood.

I tell you that this legislation has no business being on the floor today. It raises a host of questions. It has zero probability of becoming law. However, it does place Members in the awkward position of explaining why they are meddling in Puerto Rico when a request from Puerto Rico has not even been made.

There are economic issues that we must address first. The President has ordered his White House Task Force on Puerto Rico to advise him and Congress on policies and initiatives that promote job creation, education, clean energy, and health care. Instead of dealing first with the very real concerns of how the people of Puerto Rico survive day by day, we are telling them our priority is to debate a status bill that will not become law. This is a disgrace. It is baffling that the statehood question, which lost in 1967, 1993, and again in 1998, is now allowed to scheme its way to victory. It is at the urging of this losing side that House Members have cosponsored a bill that would push for yet another electoral process. Except this time, the proposal that was previously rejected has been put in a privileged position. Those who drafted

this legislation will exclude Commonwealth status in the planned plebiscite by developing a shell game—with a first-round process to legitimize it.

The process that enabled the creation of the Commonwealth was adopted by Congress. The Puerto Rico Constitution was ratified by Congress. This form of government has been upheld by our U.S. courts. That is why it's so appalling, deceitful, and shameful that the people of Puerto Rico will be denied this option. No matter how much statehood supporters complain about Commonwealth, it's the law of the land.

Congress should not be in the business of picking winners and losers for this kind of referendum. It is not our job to create artificial conditions that will enable statehood to win a popular vote in Puerto Rico. Becoming a State of the Union is something that people must embrace knowingly, voluntarily, and openly. If the people of Puerto Rico want to become a State, the statehood option should stand on its own. Why are you so afraid? There should be no need to hide behind process or petty politics.

In a matter so fundamentally important to over 4 million Puerto Ricans, you would think that a public hearing could have been convened to listen to their views. But, no. The Committee on Natural Resources and this Congress know better than the people of Puerto Rico. It is, after all, their future that it is at stake. It is an outrage that a congressional hearing on the status issue has not been held in Puerto Rico since the 1990s. As many know, I have advocated for a constitutional convention to begin the process of determining Puerto Rico's status. Certainly, this is not the only option for going forward. But a sham of a process is definitely not a valid democratic option for choosing Puerto Rico's future.

Mr. Chairman, the concept of self-determination is fundamental to democracy. Sadly, H.R. 2499 turns its back on this very principle. We must not allow politics to undermine our democratic values nor be swayed by arguments that make no sense. If you truly want to honor the contributions of Puerto Ricans and the fabric of the Puerto Rican community, vote "no" on this bill. Stand up for what is truly right. Choose principles over politics. Let Puerto Ricans decide their own destiny without undue—undue—congressional demands. Vote "no" on H.R. 2499.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, a couple of claims have been made by previous speakers about why not have a direct vote on statehood, yes or no, like Hawaii and Alaska did. I think it's worth clarifying here that those States were already incorporated territories—and the Representative from Alaska can speak to this better than I can—meaning that it was constitutionally clear that they would eventually become States. Puer-

to Rico is unincorporated, meaning it can become a nation as well as a State.

The plebiscites would determine if Puerto Ricans wanted to pursue nationhood or statehood. A number of Puerto Ricans, as we all know, want statehood; some, independence; some, free association with the U.S., such as the U.S. has with Palau and two other areas. It is unclear what the second largest group of Puerto Ricans, those who vote for the Commonwealth Party, want among the real options of continued territory status, free association, independence, and statehood.

Another claim that my ranking member and good friend Mr. HASTINGS made was that the Congress of the United States would be reduced in seats if Puerto Rico were granted statehood. I'm going to quote directly from a CRS report that was done on this issue when it said that, New States usually resulted in additions to the size of the House of Representatives in the 19th and early 20th century. The exceptions to this general rule occurred when States were formed from other States—Maine, Kentucky, and my home State of West Virginia, as I have referenced already. These State Representatives came from the allocation of Representatives of the States from which the new ones had been formed.

So I don't think the assertion that the number of Members of Congress in its totality would be reduced, with the addition, if that were to be the outcome of Puerto Rico being a State were to occur.

□ 1400

Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI), the sponsor of this legislation and truly the driving force.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Chairman, I rise in representation of the people of Puerto Rico. In fact, I am the only elected representative of the people of Puerto Rico in this Congress. In such capacity, I introduced H.R. 2499.

I have heard some complaints about process. Let's address the complaints about process, both the process here in this Congress as well as the process that this bill provides for to happen in Puerto Rico.

The process in this Congress, crystal clear. I introduced the bill along with a record number of original cosponsors. When we compared it with any previous bill relating to the status of Puerto Rico, about a month later the committee of jurisdiction, the Committee on Natural Resources, held a public hearing in which all political leaders of Puerto Rico were able to attend and testify before this Congress. A month later, the bill was marked up, like it should have been, and it was amended, it was improved upon by the committee of jurisdiction. Briefings have been held. It has been discussed widely in this Congress as well as elsewhere. So the process in this Congress has been a fair process, and it's about time we get a vote on it.

Talking about the bill itself, H.R. 2499 is simple, and it is fair. It identifies the valid political status options for Puerto Rico and authorizes a congressionally sanctioned plebiscite process among those options. It shows the highest respect for the people of Puerto Rico by being candid with them about their real status choices.

I have heard the word "meddling." We're not meddling. We're assuming a responsibility. The relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States is bilateral in nature. For any change in the status of Puerto Rico to happen, two things must happen: the people of Puerto Rico must request it, the 4 million American citizens strong who live in Puerto Rico, and Congress must grant it. Congress is vested.

It's incredible, indeed, that in the 110 years that Puerto Rico has been a territory, Congress has not even asked the 4 million American citizens living in Puerto Rico whether they want to remain under the current relationship, whether they want to continue having Puerto Rico as a territory of the United States. That is a fair question. It is the threshold question.

The bedrock principle of our system is government by consent, and the first plebiscite provided in this bill informs Congress whether a majority consents to an arrangement that denies the 4 million U.S. citizens the right to have a meaningful voice in making the laws that govern their lives. The latest example was health care reform. I worked harder than anybody else in this Congress to get fair treatment for my people in Puerto Rico, and I got the support of my colleagues from New York of Puerto Rican origin, among others. But you know what? It wasn't good enough. We were not treated like our fellow American citizens. The treatment we got fell far short of that.

If a majority of the people of Puerto Rico, though, do wish to continue living under these conditions, we will abide by that, and that's the first consultation that this bill provides for. However, if a majority of the people of Puerto Rico say to this Congress that they do not wish to continue being a territory, then the bill provides the only three nonterritorial options that we can offer or include in this plebiscite in accordance with both U.S. law and international law. Those options are crystal clear. We don't need studies. We don't need to define them further than necessary. Statehood, independence, and free association. And for anybody who is concerned about the concept of free association, we've done it before. Marshall Islands, Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, those are free associated states with a relationship with the U.S. Let's hear from the people of Puerto Rico.

I want to speak plainly now. This bill has been unfairly characterized as a statehood bill. I am a strong proponent of statehood for Puerto Rico; yes, that's so. But this bill is not a statehood bill. That's one of the options.

And it is not binding on this Congress. Once we have the results, we will act accordingly. We will have discretion to deal with these results. Residents of Puerto Rico have contributed so much to this country. Our sons and daughters have served alongside their fellow citizens from the States on countless battlefields in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman from Puerto Rico has expired.

Mr. PIERLUISI. I yield myself 1 additional minute.

As I was saying, during a late night patrol behind enemy lines, soldiers from Puerto Rico, Utah, Georgia watch each others' backs. Any differences in culture or language mean nothing. I went to Afghanistan recently to visit our troops in Afghanistan. I know what we're talking about. What matters is that the flag on their uniform is the same.

As I have said many times before, I support statehood because I believe the people of Puerto Rico have earned that right, should they choose to exercise it, to become full and equal citizens of the United States. But this is not a statehood bill. And that's why, with all due respect to the gentleman from Washington State, we will cross that bridge when we get to it.

The time and the day that Puerto Rico, the majority of the people request for statehood, you will have ample time to debate it, to deal with it, to impose a transitional period, whatever this Congress or a future Congress might want to do.

I was elected to represent all of the people of Puerto Rico, including those whose vision for the island's future differs from my own.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman from Puerto Rico has again expired.

Mr. PIERLUISI. I yield myself 15 additional seconds.

The intention of H.R. 2499 is to sponsor a fair process of self-determination in Puerto Rico, not to predetermine the outcome of that process. I have to say, in the 21st century, it is about time that this Congress, at the very least, ask the 4 million American citizens if they want to continue having the second-class citizenship they're earning and they're having today.

Vote in support of H.R. 4599.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, this is a rehash of 12 years ago. I want to compliment the Delegate from Puerto Rico for representing his people.

The Governor supports this legislation, the Senate supports this legislation, and the House supports this legislation. Strongly, the Puerto Ricans that represent their people support this

legislation. I think it's inappropriate for those that do not represent those people to speak out against this legislation. I think it's wrong not to recognize that this is long overdue.

Mr. Chairman, 112 years ago, 112 years ago Puerto Rico became Puerto Rico. They were supposed to be a State. And I am the only Member of this House that has gone through the statehood battles. This is not a statehood bill. As the Delegate has said, this is an opportunity to make that decision. Puerto Rico is not a territory. They're a Commonwealth. We were a territory. There is a great deal of difference. We did make that decision with the help of Congress, and we became a State. And I am proud of that, and I was proud of this body.

I am a little disappointed in some of the arguments that I hear against this bill: This is a statehood bill. This is a sneak attack. It was brought on us unexpectedly.

This bill has been before this Congress for 18 months, and we have discussed this issue for 12 years and longer. My bill, as I call it, the Young bill, was a statehood bill. That is a bill I would have preferred, but this is not. But this is what the Governor wants, the Delegate wants, the Senate wants, the House wants, and the people of Puerto Rico want. I think that's what we have to consider in this House. We are not the body as a whole. We are the body of the individual that represents the people, and I've argued this for many years because I am one, as the Delegate is.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. PIERLUISI. I yield the gentleman from Alaska 1 additional minute.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. It is time that we act on this legislation. Let it go forward. Let us do what is fair.

And the arguments against this legislation, some of them are very frivolous. The English language. We were not required to have English when we became a State. We had many different languages, and we became a State. We do speak English, and we speak other languages within my State. That doesn't hold us back or make us any less.

But the idea that we have 4 million people that have waited for an opportunity to become a State, an independent nation, or whatever they wish, a free association, it is time we give them that opportunity. To have a body that is supposed to represent all the people but individually represent an area, we should recognize that right, as we did when we became a State.

I am proud that the Congress made us a State. We worked for that, and I think it's time we give an opportunity for the Puerto Ricans to make a decision as to whether they are a State again or whether they're a territory, or whatever they want to be, but to give them the opportunity.

And again, when that bridge comes—and again, I can talk about bridges, la-

dies and gentlemen—when that bridge happens, we will cross it, as far as cost goes. But it's time we recognize the great people, the warriors of Puerto Rico as they serve this country, but yet they cannot vote for their Commander in Chief. It's time we pass this legislation.

Mr. Chairman, as an original co-sponsor of H.R. 2499, I am pleased that the House of Representatives is now considering this important legislation. I want to compliment the author of the bill, Resident Commissioner PEDRO PIERLUISI and my good friend the Governor of Puerto Rico, Luis Fortuño for their tireless commitment on behalf of democracy in Puerto Rico.

I have been involved in Puerto Rico democracy for most of my Congressional career. In fact, it was my bill, H.R. 856 that was approved by the House of Representatives on March 4, 1998. Prior to passage, I conducted two public hearings in Puerto Rico and literally heard from hundreds of Puerto Ricans who passionately love this country and thirst for the opportunity to determine their own political future.

The Puerto Rican people are warm, hard-working, passionate and patriotic. In fact, only one state has proportionately sent more of their sons and daughters to fight for this nation than Puerto Rico. Yet, for over a century, we continue to deny these brave warriors, who proudly wear the uniform of this nation, the chance to vote for their Commander in Chief. This is fundamentally wrong and must be changed prior to our next Presidential election.

As someone who arrived in Alaska 50 years ago, I can certainly relate to the pleas of those of my good friend former Governor and Resident Commissioner Carlos Romero Barcelo who reminds us that: "We are now being ruled by the President and Congress without the consent of the people of Puerto Rico."

I still vividly remember the words of our Former Territorial Governor and U.S. Senator, Ernest Gruening, who would shout to anyone who cared to listen that: "Let us end American colonialism." While he was talking about Alaska, similar statements have been made by Puerto Rican elected officials for decades.

H.R. 2499 may not be a perfect bill. It is, however, a fair bill which does not exclude or favor any status option.

It is frankly hard to believe that it has been 12 years since the House last voted on a Puerto Rico status bill and 112 years since Puerto Rico became a U.S. territory. It is far past time to allow the 4 million people of Puerto Rico to vote in a federally sanctioned plebiscite and it would be appropriate if this the 111th Congress were to make that vote a reality.

I urge an "aye" vote on H.R. 2499. We should no longer deny the people of Puerto Rico their right to determine their own political future.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I would like to inquire as to how much time is remaining on each side.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from New York has 24 minutes remaining, the gentleman from Puerto Rico has 14¼ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Washington State has 22 minutes remaining.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL).

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RANGEL. Let me thank the chairlady from New York for allowing me this time, and let me share the great respect and admiration that I have for the gentleman from Puerto Rico, a hardworking man. There is no question in my mind that in his heart, he wants what is best for Puerto Rico and what is best for the United States of America. And I can say the same about his predecessor who has now moved on to become the Governor.

The only question that I have—since I have been a friend of Puerto Rico for 39 years, not just legislatively but in my heart, I have felt the unfairness it is to call people citizens and yet to have to acknowledge that when it comes to health care, education, jobs, the only time that you can really know that Puerto Ricans are treated as Americans are treated is when they are drafted or when they volunteer to serve this great country of ours and when it ends up, you will find, that per capita more people from Puerto Rico have died and been wounded defending our flag than from any State or any territory. So it just seems to me that something has to be done. It is so truly unfair to respect our flag and respect our citizens and to tell them that they can fight a war when they can't even vote for the President.

And, quite frankly, as far as the status is concerned, it has hurt me as an American that this has consumed the island. And for the first time in a couple of months, I have heard about free association. I have more Puerto Ricans in my district in New York than probably in San Juan. I have never heard anyone talk about free association. I don't even know whether Members of the Congress know what free association is. As a matter of fact, a couple of people have asked me, since I've been here, who is our Ambassador to Puerto Rico anyway and what is the exchange of currency.

And to see what was happening on the rule, it is clear to me on both sides of the aisle, they want to know, What is this all about? It's about the lives of 4 million people, that's what it's about. We should at least know what we are doing before we superimpose some ideas that we have on other people.

I had an amendment—the Rules Committee rejected it—and all it did was adopt everything except, what do the people have to choose from, statehood? You bet your life. They would be entitled to it. And no matter which way they work out the number of votes—even though Tom Foley once told me when I thought that statehood was really going to pass in Puerto Rico, I said, Mr. Chairman, how are we going to handle this question with the Members? How are we going to handle the question of what parties these people are going to belong to? He said, Forget it, CHARLIE. The only time we're going to have statehood is when there is a

mandate. We're not going to have a divided territory become a State. That was a guy who told me that from his background in history that he was an expert in this type of thing.

So it just seems to me that if we all accept anyone who's known, visited, read about Puerto Rico, that their biggest argument has been, majorly, those who want statehood, those who want a Commonwealth, and a smaller number who would like to have independence, which sounds great politically, but somehow internationally it doesn't make a lot of sense.

So what did my amendment do? It said, Go to the polls. Say if you want Commonwealth. Say if you want statehood. Say if you want independence. Or say, Not at this time. Let me breathe and try to figure this out. Because if we don't know what statehood is, how do we expect them to know?

□ 1415

When I asked these questions, someone said: Oh, no, they would have already rejected Commonwealth.

Well, I think some of us on this floor, if asked if we like the status we have in the Congress, we might say, especially some of my friends on the other side, that they don't like the status. Well, if I was in the minority, I wouldn't like the status either. But the truth of the matter is it doesn't mean that you want to get rid of it all. It may mean I don't like the status as it is. I would like to change it. I would like to have it improved. I would like to improve education and I would like to make certain that the expenses that Mr. HASTINGS talks about in terms of programs that are designed to help American citizens, that they would get them.

What price does it take to give your life for your flag and then find out how much it is going to cost to give them the things that Americans would want. So my problem is that Commonwealth doesn't get a chance. They call the existing government, which I don't really think means rejection of status, because there is a lot of romance and emotion that is involved in Puerto Rico. So give them the opportunity to say Commonwealth, but we don't need free association when hardly anyone here knows, especially the people in Puerto Rico, what does it mean.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ), and I understand that he also gets 1 minute from the gentleman from New York.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, that is correct.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Utah is recognized for 2 minutes.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the time.

Isn't it ironic that a bill about self-determination has got to have the heavy hand of the United States Congress dictating to the people of Puerto Rico about this vote. I find that terribly ironic.

There is no need for the United States Congress to pass this bill. No need. Four times, in 1952, in 1967, in 1993 and in 1998, the people of Puerto Rico were able to vote on this. They didn't need the approval of the United States Congress to do it; they don't need it today. But it is a manipulation of the process to try to get a desired outcome.

If you want to vote on statehood, take a straight vote. Do the people of Puerto Rico, yes or no, do the people of Puerto Rico want statehood? Simple, straightforward, to the point, and let's understand if that is truly what they want.

I am a conservative person. I do not believe that I should be trying to manipulate what is happening in Puerto Rico and what they want.

Finally, I will end with this. Please, as you consider this bill, understand that you are empowering people to vote in this election that have no business voting in this election. If you were born in Puerto Rico, you lived there 2 months and then you suddenly moved to the United States and you've lived here for the last 30, 40 years, you get to vote in this election. Why should a resident of Utah or Indiana vote in an election in Puerto Rico? That is fundamentally wrong and it is there because they want to manipulate the end result.

This is about Puerto Rico and the vote should be taken in Puerto Rico by the people of Puerto Rico if the people of Puerto Rico choose to do so, and not because of the heavy hand of the United States Congress. I urge my colleagues to vote "no."

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield 10 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ).

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I thank the gentleman.

Look, this is the Puerto Rico 51st State bill. It is the only result you can possibly expect. The deck is stacked. We all know. I was talking to my friends on the other side, and you know what they keep saying to me: Why are you against statehood? Everywhere I go: Why are you against statehood? They don't say: Why are you against the people of Puerto Rico having a free vote in determining their future and in exercising their right to self-determination?

Why do we come here and try to like hoodwink one another, fool one another. I mean, you know what I would like to see on the House floor, the same depth of honesty, sincerity and clarity and transparency that exists when people come up to me and ask why I am against statehood for Puerto Rico.

That is not why I am up here. I am against a process that does not allow the people of Puerto Rico to exercise their sovereign right to determine their future in a free manner.

Now, what does that mean? Everybody says well, there are 4 million American citizens in Puerto Rico. Have you ever considered one thing, that the

proponents of statehood, the proponents of statehood have never said that the Puerto Rican team must be part of the U.S. Olympic team? Have you ever thought about that contradiction that exists? I am happy to have statehood with a Puerto Rican Olympic team, and would support such a statehood; but does the Congress support such a statehood?

The fact is that the gentleman from Puerto Rico is doing a wonderful job on this bill, knows and understands that the language that is used in Puerto Rico is the Spanish language. It is the language of government. It is the language of commerce. It is the language of industry. It is the language of the courts. It is the common language of the people of Puerto Rico. And you know what, I would love to see the 51st State have Spanish as their primary language.

But do you not think the Congress of the United States should consider such a fact? And the reason I put this to you is because they keep saying, remember those words, "mandated by the Congress." This is plebiscite mandated by the Congress. So what they are going to do is have a plebiscite mandated by the Congress where the statehooders get to define what statehood is during their plebiscite. They are going to have a Congress where independence gets to be defined, and the only one that we define is the relevant current status in Puerto Rico. That is the only one that we define.

I want to take a minute so that we can see how absurd, it says here, and this is the definition, sovereignty in association with the United States, a political relationship between sovereign nations not subject to the territorial clause of the United States Constitution.

You don't think that's going to confuse some people? Just think about it a moment. What does that mean? Okay, so I guess at this point what the Congress of the United States is saying, if this is the winner, this is the winner, Puerto Rico is sovereign. It means Puerto Rico is independent.

Does the FBI got to go? Does the IRS go that day? No, seriously, who controls immigration in and out of Puerto Rico? Who controls the ports? The Federal Government is gone, do we stop sending Social Security checks? Medicare and Medicaid, are they suspended? I mean, think about it one moment. What is it that occurs at that moment?

I would love to see a relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico where Puerto Rico is an independent sovereign nation. That is my belief. But ladies and gentlemen, I will not impose my beliefs on the people of Puerto Rico. The people of Puerto Rico, as the gentleman from Utah referred to earlier, they said, No. They said, No. They said, No. How many times do we have to say "no"? Do not impose a result that the people of Puerto Rico have rejected freely and which they can constitute.

As a matter of fact, the last time there was a plebiscite in Puerto Rico in 1998, do you know which option won? This option beat statehood: none of the above, received over 50 percent of the vote.

I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

In my opening remarks, I stated the reasons why I had a problem with this procedure, and I did not mention the option that you talked about, association.

I just wonder if the gentleman knows or maybe can help me, where did that come from?

Mr. GUTIERREZ. You know, I am kind of like Mr. RANGEL. I mean, this definition is a new definition. Now I will tell you this, the gentleman from Puerto Rico represents the Statehood Party in Puerto Rico. He came down here and he defined his own status or a lack of definition of his status. But you know what the next thing he did was, he defined the opposition status.

You know, that reminds me of kind of like Barack Obama going to JOHN MCCAIN during the election and saying: Tell you what, why don't you tell me what my platform is, write it for me, and that's what I'm going to run on later on.

You cannot allow this to happen because it is not a democratic process. The result is already. Let me just share with the gentleman that Senator WICKER, and I am going to ask that his statement be included in the RECORD at the appropriate moment, just issued a statement straight over from the other body, saying he's going to oppose this measure. It hasn't even been adopted and they are already going to oppose it, so we all know what the end result and futility is of what we do here today. They are already telling us that they are going to oppose this, and there is no companion bill.

Does the gentleman have another question?

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. If the gentleman would yield, this is a point because my argument was, and I stated three other issues, we ought to know what we are doing because it has been suggested that this is not a statehood bill. But I have responded to at least that remark by saying it may not be a strict statehood bill, but it certainly gives blessing to an outcome on which we don't know what that outcome is. If it becomes association, then what do we do?

I just want to say that I think the gentleman makes a good point because the bottom line in all of this is there are too many unanswered questions on a process where we are blessing an outcome to make a determination whether we should have another, add to our Union the 51st State. I think that is serious, and I appreciate the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Thank you. This is what I think we genuinely need. But

let me just add further, there has been much said about the importance of American citizenship and there are many Puerto Ricans who cherish their American citizenship and have fought for their American citizenship. But if you have 4 million American citizens and they don't want to incorporate as a State, shouldn't we respect that? Here's the logic, they were American citizens; therefore, they deserve statehood. The finality of it all, the justice of it all, right, the correct course of it all is to grant them statehood.

I think if they wanted independence tomorrow and they are citizens of the United States, and let me just say, it seems to me that George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were subjects of the king, and one day they got up and said we want to be free. They didn't quite agree with them, but that also is an option for American citizens.

You know what, maybe these 4 million American citizens don't want to become a State because they love their language; because they love their culture; because they love their idiosyncrasies; because they love applauding for their Olympic team when it goes out there on the international stage; because so many Miss Universes come from Puerto Rico. What if that is what they want, should we not respect that decision?

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I yield.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. I thank you for yielding.

It seems to me that this bill is almost the exact opposite of self-determination. Self-determination would be allowing the people in Puerto Rico to determine whether or not to have a referendum, a plebiscite, and what the questions would be. Hopefully it would be a straightforward question, as they have had three or four times in the past, but to have Congress mandate what the people of Puerto Rico have to do, that they have to have a plebiscite, have to have these questions on the ballot, it seems to me that is the opposite of self-determination and it is as you said, a congressional mandate. Is that how you see it as well?

□ 1430

Mr. GUTIERREZ. You know, I do, I see this as a congressional mandate. And you know what? We should not mandate statehood. Citizens organized of the United States of America, in incorporated or unincorporated territory, under or outside the territorial clause of the Constitution of the United States, should, together, in a vast majority, I believe—because, listen, this is like me going to my wife, and I ask her, Will you marry me? And she kind of hesitates and she says, How about if I'm loyal 50 percent of the time? How about 60 percent of the time? How about if we condition this relationship? Come on. That's what we're talking about here. We had a civil war to decide this. Once a State, always a State. Be careful what you wish for.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO).

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 2499, the Puerto Rico Democracy Act of 2009, introduced by my colleague, Congressman PEDRO PIERLUISI.

As the chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife, I fully support this bill which the full Natural Resources Committee reported out favorably on July 22 last year.

H.R. 2499 is an important bill for Puerto Rico and the other U.S. territories. As the delegate from Guam, I understand the desire of residents in the territories to decide their future and make a determination about their political future. Unlike other speakers here this afternoon, we on Guam are also in this same process of trying to determine our status. H.R. 2499 will provide the people of Puerto Rico a congressionally sanctioned process to express their preference regarding their political status.

Each territory, Mr. Chairman, is on a different path towards self-determination, and what is appropriate for Puerto Rico may not be suitable for other territories. But I firmly believe that the process established by H.R. 2499 is the best way, and I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), and I understand the gentleman from Puerto Rico will yield him 1 minute as well.

Mr. PIERLUISI. That is correct.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized for 2 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Chairman, this is so muddled up I don't know if anybody that's paying attention really understands what's going on.

This is just a process, that's all it is. The people who are going to decide whether or not any territory becomes a State is this body and the Senate. What we are asking for is a recommendation from the people of Puerto Rico. They're dying for this country; more have died percentage-wise in conflicts than any State in the Union. Their Governor wants this plebiscite, their Representative wants this plebiscite, their state senate wants this plebiscite, and the state house of representatives want this plebiscite. They know what this bill is. They've come and they've testified before the Resources Committee. They know, and they represent the people of Puerto Rico.

So these people coming down here from New York and everywhere else, they don't know; they don't know what they're talking about.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR. The gentleman will suspend.

The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests

of the House and that any manifestations of approval or disapproval of proceedings or other audible conversation is in violation of the rules of the House.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. The people who want to have this determination made are the people of Puerto Rico, and their elected representatives altogether say let's have this bill passed. And yet people from New York and from Washington—I mean, I don't know how close the State of Washington is to Puerto Rico, but it's about 4,000 miles, maybe 5,000, and New York is quite a ways away. Why don't we listen to what the elected representatives of Puerto Rico want.

And it's Democrat and Republican. This is not a partisan issue. So my view is, let's let them have the plebiscite. Let's come up with a process that will work. We've tried this before, and it has been split up all over the place. This process will work. It will boil it down to what the people of Puerto Rico really want. I believe they want statehood, and we ought to let them determine that. If their representatives want it, if their Governor wants it, if everybody else wants it, and if they are sacrificing their lives for this country, then by gosh we ought to give them a chance to be a State.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time remains on every side.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from New York has 8½ minutes remaining; the gentleman from Puerto Rico has 12¼ minutes remaining; and the gentleman from Washington State has 20 minutes remaining.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 2499, the Puerto Rico Democracy Act, introduced by our colleague, Mr. PIERLUISI.

Many of us on the Natural Resources Committee, including myself, Mr. RAHALL, and Mr. YOUNG, have been grappling with this issue of political status for Puerto Rico for decades, and we each have the scars to prove it. We have held numerous hearings over the years in Washington and in Puerto Rico. We have listened to the representatives of not only the political parties, but the citizens of Puerto Rico, and we've heard testimony from across the spectrum, including the representatives of each of the political parties in Puerto Rico. In light of all that experience, I am convinced that Congress must provide the people of Puerto Rico the opportunity to voice their preferences. That is what today's legislation would do, a fair opportunity for a self-determination process.

Puerto Rico has been a territory for 112 years, and it has been an important part of this country in peacetime and

in war. Four million residents of Puerto Rico are American citizens and they are bound by Federal law, and yet Congress has never asked Puerto Ricans to officially express their views on the island's political status.

This legislation does not bind future Congresses. H.R. 2499 doesn't require the Federal Government to create a Puerto Rican state, nor does it force us to work toward Puerto Rican independence. This bill simply asks the citizens of Puerto Rico whether they want to remain a U.S. territory in their current status or whether they would prefer another political status. And if it turns out they favor another political status, another vote would then be authorized to determine which status option they prefer.

Considering the context and the history wrapped up in this issue, this legislation is as fair as you can possibly expect. I would hope that this House would respond by passing this legislation and sending the message to the people of Puerto Rico that Congress would welcome their telling us what they prefer their status to be. That is a choice that they will make in a free and open process, and they can proceed to the second question or not. But we will have asked them, instead of what we've seen in the past is people scrambling, depending upon political advantage in Puerto Rico, one particular time trying to rush to get a vote or get a statement or get a plebiscite. This is a process that's set out, it's fair, and we should support it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, the proponents have a problem. They want statehood for Puerto Rico, but the people of Puerto Rico keep voting "no." Well, what to do. Well, they replace a straightforward up-or-down vote with a very clever two-step process. If 40 percent support the Commonwealth and only 20 percent favor each of three alternatives, the overwhelming plurality is defeated on the first ballot, and they're left only to choose among three options, none of which they support. And then, just to be sure, proponents stuff the ballot box by letting non-Puerto Ricans vote just as long as they were born there. Well, that means that, as a Californian, I should be entitled to vote in New York's elections because I was born there.

This bill isn't needed for a referendum. Puerto Rico can do that on its own. The purpose of this bill is to imply congressional support of this rigged election process that has no legal effect, that has surrendered any moral validity, and that promises only to set off bitter divisions within the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I thank my good friend from Washington for the time.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 2499, the Puerto Rico Democracy Act. This bill will provide a congressionally sanctioned process by which U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico can determine their preferences regarding the territory's political status.

This is not a bill to admit Puerto Rico as the 51st State. This bill, instead, would enable Puerto Ricans to determine their status preference by presenting all of the options possible under the law. They would be presented through a series of votes.

In the first plebiscite, voters will decide if they want a continuation of the current status or to change status. If voters decide to change status, a second plebiscite will be held on the three viable options for change: independence, statehood, or free association with the U.S.

The Puerto Rico Democracy Act does not include the misguided "enhanced Commonwealth option." An enhanced Commonwealth, as envisioned by the bill's critics, perpetuates the false hope that Puerto Ricans can have the best of both worlds: they can have U.S. citizenship and national sovereignty; they can receive generous Federal funding and have the power to veto those laws with which it disagrees. If included as a viable option, an enhanced Commonwealth proposal would permanently empower Puerto Rico to nullify Federal laws and court jurisdiction. An enhanced Commonwealth option would also set the stage for Puerto Rico to enter into international organizations and trade agreements, all while being under the military and financial protection of the United States.

It is no surprise that this proposal has been soundly rejected as a viable option by the U.S. Department of Justice, the State Department, the Clinton administration, and the Bush administration. It is time that the people of Puerto Rico are given real options for the future political status of their homeland and not false promises.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill before us today.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Texas. First of all, I thank the ranking member of the committee and the gentleman from Washington State for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, there are at least three reasons to oppose this bill, any one of which should be persuasive.

First, it rigs a proposed new referendum to force Puerto Ricans to choose what they have voted against four times in the past, statehood. It does not provide Puerto Ricans with a fair, straightforward way to choose among statehood, independence, and remaining a Commonwealth. The bill also allows U.S. citizens who are na-

tives of Puerto Rico to vote in the referendum even if they now live in the United States.

Second, the poverty rate in Puerto Rico is almost 45 percent, twice that of our poorest State, Mississippi. The Congressional Budget Office estimated in 1990 that if Puerto Rico were to become a State, Federal entitlement and welfare costs for Puerto Rico would jump by 143 percent. That was 20 years ago. If Puerto Rico does become a State, the additional cost to American taxpayers of government benefits are likely to be in the tens of billions of dollars, but no cost analyses have been released. One can only guess why.

Third, let's acknowledge that to some this bill is a Democratic power play. The Pew Hispanic Center reported in 2008 that 61 percent of Puerto Rican registered voters were Democrats, 11 percent were Republicans, and 24 percent were independents.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill for any or all of these reasons.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the Republican Conference chairman, Mr. PENCE.

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise in support of the Puerto Rico Democracy Act, which simply grants the people of Puerto Rico a say in their future.

First, a little history lesson. The American flag has flown over Puerto Rico for more than a century. It has been a U.S. territory since 1898. The people of Puerto Rico have been citizens of the United States since 1917. Citizens born in Puerto Rico are natural-born U.S. citizens bound by Federal law. They pay Federal payroll taxes, and they are even eligible to be elected President.

American citizens from Puerto Rico have been drafted into military service during World War II and every war ever since—five Medal of Honor winners from Puerto Rico—65,034 Puerto Ricans served in World War II alone.

□ 1445

It has been an enormous contribution to the life of this Nation by these American citizens.

As a conservative who believes in the power of self-determination and of individual liberty, I believe the 4 million American citizens in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico should be able to voice their opinions about Puerto Rico's relationship to the United States, although the ultimate determination of that fate rests with this Congress, and I am pleased to stand in a long line of Republicans who have taken that view. Every Republican President for the last 50 years has been committed to self-determination and democracy for the American citizens in Puerto Rico.

In 1982, President Ronald Reagan said, "Puerto Ricans have borne the responsibilities of U.S. citizenship with honor and courage for more than 64 years. They have fought beside us for decades and have worked beside us for generations." He also added Puerto Rico's "strong tradition of democracy provides leadership and stability" in the Caribbean. I agree.

If the American citizens of Puerto Rico choose independence, I will support that vote. If the American citizens of Puerto Rico choose statehood, I will support that vote. I am equally confident that this Congress will be able to resolve any difficult issues about taxation, obligations of individuals and, most importantly, about the need for English to be the official language prior to any offering of citizenship to that territory.

The American citizens of Puerto Rico have fought, have bled, and have died in our military, on virtually every continent, in order to spread democracy and the right of self-determination. It seems to me it would be the height of hypocrisy for this Congress to deny the very same rights for which Americans have fought all over this world to the American citizens of Puerto Rico.

I know this is a difficult and a contentious debate, and I hold in the highest regard my colleagues who take a different view; but for me, for President Ronald Reagan, and for all freedom-loving Americans, I believe with all of my heart the time has come to adopt the Puerto Rico Democracy Act and to begin the process of allowing the American citizens of Puerto Rico to determine what will be their destiny, and we will determine it as well.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN).

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 additional minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN).

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Tennessee is recognized for 4 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this bill.

First of all, I would like to thank the gentleman from Washington State and the gentlewoman from New York for yielding me this time.

I have been to Puerto Rico three times. The people there have treated me in a very kind way, as kind as any place I have ever been, and I think Puerto Rico is a wonderful place.

I served with Governor Fortuño, who is the main proponent of this bill, and Governor Anibal Acevedo Vila before him. I have great respect for and, I hope, friendship with both of those men, but I oppose this bill.

The Washington Times said in an editorial yesterday that this is a bad bill, written "to stack the deck in favor of statehood for Puerto Rico" and that it "actually tramples self-determination in favor of an underhanded political power grab."

Those aren't my words. Those are the words of the Washington Times.

The Times' editorial went on to read, "The bill is deliberately designed to unfairly make it harder for Puerto Rico to keep its current status as a territory with special benefits rather than as a State."

The fairest way to have a vote on this issue would have been to have a simple, straightforward ballot with three choices—statehood, Commonwealth, or independence. However, the proponents of this bill seem to know that the statehood option would not receive over half of the vote in a fair, simple, straightforward ballot. Each time Puerto Rico has voted on this issue, less than half the people have voted for statehood.

When Alaska and Hawaii were admitted to the Union, some 80 or 85 percent of the people in those States voted for and wanted statehood. This is not the case in Puerto Rico.

I have serious reservations about making a territory a State with less than half the people who really want that status. In addition, the last time this issue came up, it was estimated that it would have an immediate impact of several billions of dollars on the Federal budget. With the economy the way it is now, statehood for Puerto Rico would be even more expensive today. As one previous speaker pointed out, Puerto Rico could set up a vote on this any time they want, but the statehood proponents want Congress to rig the election in favor of statehood.

That is not the right way to do this, Mr. Chairman, so I oppose this bill. For all of these reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this bill and to defeat the gimmick process that we are dealing with here today.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO).

(Mr. SERRANO asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SERRANO. I thank the gentleman.

So much has been said today about what this bill does. Yet so little is understood, perhaps, about what this bill really does. The bill continues to be a bill I support strongly because, if nothing else, the strength of it is that it begins a process.

When I have told many Members of what the bill doesn't do, they ask me, Then why do you support it?

I support it because it begins a process. I support it because, for the first time in 112 years, the people of Puerto Rico will have an opportunity to express themselves, to say what they wish. Then we don't have to act on it. I suspect that we will, but we won't be imposing anything on anyone.

Another argument is that this bill forces statehood on Puerto Rico, but that argument is made by people who say there is no majority in support of statehood in Puerto Rico. Therefore, people would be voting out of—what?—

ignorance. Well, I'll repeat what I have been saying all week.

I grew up in New York. I don't live in Puerto Rico, but I know one thing for a fact, not an opinion, which is that Puerto Ricans, from the age of about 10 or 12, know the status issue, discuss the status issue, and debate the status issue on a daily basis. It is the number one concern on the island. Therefore, no one will vote for statehood who does not believe in statehood. No one will vote for independence who is forced to vote for independence. No one will vote for free association who is forced to vote. They will do it because they believe in it and because they believe it is the right thing to do.

Some in Congress have asked, Why don't they do it on their own? Because, when they have done it on their own, we have ignored it.

Then there is another reason, one that may offend people if you don't present it properly: Puerto Rico did not invade the United States. The United States invaded Puerto Rico in 1898, and it has held it. According to the Constitution, it is up to the United States Congress to dispose of, if you will, the territory or to adjust the territorial status. If we tell them to do whatever they please, we will ignore what they do. If we tell them to do something, then it will be part of a process—again, that word "process." So it is our responsibility to tell them to hold this vote.

Now, if they hold the vote and determine that they wish to become an independent nation, we will then be able to say, Well, you asked for that with 45 percent of the vote. Can you go back and take another vote and come back with 80 percent? Similarly, if they vote for statehood, we could say, No, you didn't come here, asking us for a certain amount. You have to go back.

So my point is that this bill does not end the process. With all due respect to my colleagues on both sides who oppose the bill, do you honestly believe that Congress would give anybody statehood just based on the first simple vote? I can assure you that, if statehood is ever to come to Puerto Rico, there will be a vote to accept the results of Puerto Rico's vote. There will be a vote to grant statehood to Puerto Rico. Then there will be a vote asking the Puerto Ricans "yes" or "no" if they accept statehood. It is just not going to happen. The process will take years. We are not doing what people think we are doing.

What we are doing is being honest to the comments we make on a daily basis, which are that we go overseas to fight for freedom and independence, for the ability to be free people and to make free choices. Yet we're going to say today that we won't allow 4 million American citizens to simply advise us on this choice? That is a mistake. That truly is un-American. What do we have to fear—that the territory may ask for a change in its status? It might choose not to do so.

One very important point: People say that the Commonwealth is defeated. No. In the first vote, you can choose to remain a Commonwealth. In the second vote, you stop being a colony.

Vote for this bill.

Mr. RAHALL. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN).

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Chairman, as an original cosponsor of H.R. 2499, the Puerto Rico Democracy Act, I stand here proudly in support of this bill. I am somewhat surprised by some of the criticism registered here. I understand how we can have differences of opinion, but to suggest that somehow this undermines the authority of the Congress of the United States or that it is somehow contrary to the Constitution is just beyond the pale as far as I can see.

As the gentleman who just spoke before me said, this is an attempt to get an idea of how the people of Puerto Rico feel about this very important issue. They are American citizens. People have raised all sorts of scenarios about what may or may not happen. Go back and look at how other States have been admitted to the Union. Ultimately, the decision is made by this Congress.

I remember reading about Utah. When they were a territory, Utah wasn't accepted in the Union until they changed a certain policy on marriage. It was an extraordinary change that was required, but that was what happened. Congress didn't supinely stand here or lay down there and say, Oh, yes. You've said you want to be a State. Therefore, we take no action.

This is a way of our getting a measure of the sentiment of the people of Puerto Rico. I don't see why we should be upset about that. I know there are some outside observers who have suggested that somehow this undermines the Constitution and that somehow there is the Tennessee's plot. Examine the history of Tennessee. Examine the history of the response of Congress. It is absolutely historically factual that Congress decides under what terms a new State will be formed, when and if we will accept a new State.

So all I am saying is allow this to go forward. Allow us to find out what the sentiment is here. Our good friend Luis Fortuno is not someone who shows little respect for the Constitution.

Pass this bill.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just want to ask the gentleman from California a question: So, basically, in listening to your argument, you are clearly stating that this is a pro-statehood bill, aren't you?

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. If the gentlewoman would yield, No.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, I would like to inquire how much time remains.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from New York has 7½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Puerto Rico has 6¼ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Washington State has 8½ minutes remaining.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PIERLUISI. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands.

Mr. SABLÁN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 2499.

As the newest member of the American family just 35 years ago, on a plebiscite called an act of free political self-determination, we went to the ballot and had one choice only—Commonwealth.

For us to say that Congress can give Puerto Rico the options it has in H.R. 2499, because it appears as if it's only statehood, we do this all the time, Mr. Chairman. We're not doing it now. We go to war. We are trying to give people free will and freedom. Yet we tell them it is freedom in association with the United States. It took Puerto Rico 100 years of being part of the United States. Only in the past 12 years has this discussion started.

□ 1500

It's about time. Let's put the question to the people of Puerto Rico. Give them an option. They could choose statehood; they could choose to remain a Commonwealth. Let's pass H.R. 2499. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from Washington for yielding and for leading on this issue.

Mr. Chairman, I want to just add to this discussion and deliberation that what really happens here is that if this should pass today, and I rise in opposition to H.R. 2499, Mr. Chairman, but it sets up a momentum, it sets up a level of expectations, and the sequence of events being the question that would go before Puerto Ricans and those who were born in Puerto Rico that would live in any of the other 50 States presumably, do you want to stay the same or do you want to change? And once that decision is made, then there is no going back.

The momentum then washes over the dam. And the next question that comes back is, now you can't be what you were before. Now you have to decide between being an independent country or a free association, whatever that might be, or statehood. And when we get to this question of statehood and I look at the standards that have been there in the past, I disagree with the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG). I can go up there and English is the language that is used in government and business and everywhere you go.

Yes, every language you can imagine is spoken of in every State, but the practice in Puerto Rico is Spanish, not

English. Eighty-five percent of Puerto Ricans will self-profess that they are not proficient in English. They have very little understanding of English.

In fact, I will introduce into the RECORD the Latin American Herald Tribune, dated April 26, where the Secretary of Education in Puerto Rico, the Governor's Secretary, said, English is taught in Puerto Rico as if it were a foreign language and 85 percent aren't proficient in it.

I will also introduce into the RECORD a letter from U.S. English, Incorporated. Among it is a statement I think that's very important to consider here in this body, which says: "No State has ever been allowed to come into the Union when its core organs of government operate in a foreign language, and Puerto Rico must not be an exception." And, Mr. Chairman, it points out that Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma had those conditions as conditions coming into statehood.

I just would make this point, that I wouldn't rise here today and take this position here today, since 1917 or even the last 50 years. If the practice of education and government in Puerto Rico had been the unifying common language, we would be unified as a people. Let's start that path and have this discussion in a generation.

Congressman DOC HASTINGS,
Ranking Member, House Natural Resources Committee, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN HASTINGS: On behalf of 1.8 million members of U.S. English, we oppose the current version of H.R. 2499, the Puerto Rico Democracy Act. H.R. 2499 fails to address the serious language questions pertaining to Puerto Rico's status, and compounds this error by pretending to address these issues. This vote will be featured prominently in the legislative scorecard we distribute to our members.

As you are aware, Puerto Rico's current policies with respect to language have never been allowed for any incoming state.

While English is mandatory in Puerto Rico's public schools, it is taught as a foreign language, and instruction rarely exceeds one hour per day. Unsurprisingly, just 20 percent of Puerto Rico's residents speak English fluently. California has the lowest proficiency rate among the 50 states, and its rate is 80 percent.

Puerto Rico's local courts and legislature operate entirely in Spanish, with English translations available only upon request.

No state has ever been allowed to come into the Union when its core organs of government operate in a foreign language, and Puerto Rico must not be an exception.

Yesterday, the Rules committee defeated amendments offered by Rep. Paul Broun that would have brought Puerto Rico's policies in line with the other 50 states as a condition for statehood. Instead, the committee reported an "alternative" English amendment by Rep. Dan Burton.

The Burton amendment, while purportedly offering a Puerto Rican state equal treatment, actually offers special treatment by allowing statehood with these historically unprecedented policies intact. Burton's insistence that Puerto Rico will be subject to federal official language policies is meaningless, since the United States has no official language. Further, Burton's "sense of Congress that English be promoted" has no legal force.

The Burton language is contrary to Congress' uniform historical practice when the language of government of a potential state was in genuine doubt. Congress required—not "promoted"—English to be the language of instruction for public schools in Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma as a condition for statehood.

I urge any member who cares about English's role in our national unity to oppose this version of the legislation.

Sincerely,

MAURO E. MUJICA,
Chairman of the Board, U.S. English, Inc.

[From the Latin American Herald Tribune,
Apr. 26, 2010]

PUERTO RICAN GOVERNMENT WANTS BILINGUAL NATION

SAN JUAN.—The Puerto Rican government wants to establish programs for teaching English to make the younger generations bilingual on an island where 85 percent of the population admits to having only a very basic idea of the language.

Education Secretary Odette Piñero said Tuesday in an interview with Efe that the department supports the initiative of Puerto Rico's resident commissioner in Washington, Pedro Pierluisi, to ask for more federal funding for teaching English in the public schools of this U.S. commonwealth.

"Spanish and English are the official languages of Puerto Rico, that is established," Piñero said, adding that the point of the proposal is to give public school students on the island the same opportunities as those who go to private schools.

Piñero also said that the measure will make sure that when young people on the island finish their studies they will be able to perform correctly both in Spanish and in English, which she said was something Puerto Rican society was asking for.

She was referring to an initiative announced by Pierluisi to ask that Title III funds be quadrupled for Puerto Rico, which would bring to \$14 million per year the amount the Caribbean island would get for that purpose.

Piñero said that preceding administrations lost their chance to access those funds by not presenting the corresponding application the right way.

The secretary said that the measure "will improve employment opportunities" for the Caribbean island's young people, after commenting that "English is taught in Puerto Rico as if it were a foreign language."

"The idea is to give the necessary resources to kids in public schools so they have the same opportunities," she said.

For her part, the director of the Linguistics Program at the University of Puerto Rico, Yolanda Rivera, told Efe she is in favor of free choice in learning languages.

Rivera said, nonetheless, that "English is a foreign language in Puerto Rico," and there are political criteria for making that language more prevalent here as sought by the administration of Gov. Luis Fortuño, whose party favors U.S. statehood for the island.

"Deciding which language to teach is based on political criteria," Rivera said, adding that if commercial interests were the most important thing, Chinese would be the ideal language given the heights the Asian nation has reached internationally in that area.

The professor also said that she is concerned about Pierluisi's announcement of the hypothetical arrival of U.S. English teachers on the island.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished Republican whip, Mr. CANTOR.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman from Washington for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, for 93 years individuals born in Puerto Rico have been U.S. citizens, but Puerto Rico itself has been a Commonwealth. And as neither State nor an independent political entity, it has, as Ronald Reagan once said, an unnatural status. It is part of our country, but not entirely. Separate from our country, but not really.

Ronald Reagan was motivated to support possible statehood for Puerto Rico in part because our communist enemies were at the time exploiting Puerto Rico's status to sow unrest in Latin America by calling for an end to "Yankee imperialism." While the Soviet Union may no longer be with us, Hugo Chavez is attempting to sow the same unrest, calling for an end to U.S. imperialism in Puerto Rico.

Reagan said back in 1980 that we must be ready to demonstrate that "the American idea can work in Puerto Rico." Over the past 2 years, my friend, Governor Luis Fortuno, has worked to do just that. The Governor and others are actively working to increase economic opportunity by reducing the burden the government places on the people, introducing competition and choice to education, lowering taxes, restoring law and order, and defending traditional values.

Listening to these achievements, I am reminded that the great experiment begun by our Founding Fathers is not in its last days, but instead is being constantly renewed as we work to expand what it means to live in a land of opportunity.

Our best export has always been our ideas. And first and foremost amongst those ideas is the promise that limited government based on the consent of the governed that respects the inalienable rights granted by God is the best hope for mankind on Earth. These ideas have also served as a magnet drawing all those who wish for a better life to our shores.

The citizens of Puerto Rico share in this American inheritance. They share in our values and in their belief in the American Dream. The citizens of Puerto Rico deserve the opportunity to speak to their aspirations for the future in a sanctioned plebiscite.

If I were drafting this bill, Mr. Chairman, I would draft it differently. And while this legislation is far from perfect, I am motivated at the end of the day to support it by the belief that America's promise is not finite in terms of space or time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ).

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Look, let's take another look at it. Mr. LUNGREN came before us, and on numerous occasions, what did he say? Allow Puerto Rico to become a State. Just check his words. Before that it was Mr. BURTON from Indiana. In other words, they equate American citizen-

ship with a fundamental, inalienable right to statehood.

There's no one right, inalienable right, that the people of Puerto Rico have. It's to their independence. And the Founding Fathers that we like to talk so much about would agree with us here today. If Thomas Jefferson were here today, he would say one thing: There is one and only one inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico, something that could never be taken away from them, and that's to their independence.

And why do I bring this issue up today? I bring the issue up today so that we can understand that Puerto Rico is not just 4 million American citizens on an island; it is a culturally, it is a psychologically, constituted geographically, linguistically constituted nation of people, Puerto Ricans. Go to that nation of people today, and while they may love and cherish America, which is actually a good thing if you think about it today, a nation of people who love and cherish America, they still are fundamentally Puerto Rican. Ask them.

Has anybody been to a Puerto Rican parade in New York? Go out there with American flags on the day of a Puerto Rican parade. See how much money you make at the Puerto Rican day parade in New York or Chicago. No, it's an affirmation of who we are. Very different than the Italian day parade, than the Irish parade, than the Polish parade, in which you see many American flags.

Why is it that we continue to affirm this? Why is it that even those proponents of statehood for Puerto Rico have not been able to banish the Olympic team? They dare not. Why is it they have not been able to banish the language of Spanish? They dare not. Because those are things that are intrinsic to the people of Puerto Rico.

Look, let's stop kidding ourselves. Let's stop kidding ourselves. This is an attempt to do one thing and one thing only. Everybody talks about the American citizens and their right to statehood. What about the American citizens, and I say the only inalienable right that they have, to their independence? What about the 1.8 million pages that were sent to Congressman SERRANO on the backs of the FBI and intelligence agency for those of us that fought for Puerto Rican independence? What about those that have been jailed? What about those poets? What about those great Puerto Rican patriots who believe and will continue to believe in independence for Puerto Rico? That is a reality that we need to deal with.

So when Mr. CANTOR was speaking about the inalienable right, he was speaking about the inalienable right that the Founding Fathers bestowed upon those to be free from colonialism.

The current situation in Puerto Rico is deplorable. The current status of Puerto Rico is a colonial status. And we should move forward to eliminate

that stain in our relationship with the people of Puerto Rico. But they have just as much right to independence, they have just as much right to independence as they do to statehood. And as a matter of fact, they have asserted that right.

Let me end with this: We keep saying let them, congressionally sanction. Ladies and gentlemen, they have come together on numerous occasions, and on each and every occasion, they have said, We don't want to be a State. They would like something different. Why are we imposing?

And really, look, everybody talks about the Founding Fathers. You know how the Founding Fathers did it? They had a Constitutional Convention. They got together and they had delegates from different States come together so they could have a Declaration of Independence, so they could build a Constitution. You know what? Let not the Congress of the United States say that this is democracy. Do you know what true democracy is? This Congress saying to the people of Puerto Rico get together in a constitutional convention, assemble yourselves, decide among yourselves, and we the Congress of the United States will respect that decision. We will not impose a process. We will not impose definitions upon you.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON).

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this important matter. This legislation is about what is right and what is fair.

Since 1898 residents of Puerto Rico have been deprived of full and equal political representation. Though its residents are American citizens, the island is not a State and its residents have no equal voting representation in Congress. Given a choice, Puerto Ricans might opt to change this situation. Some in Puerto Rico might opt for a statehood for the island, some might opt for independence, and some might opt for sovereign association. But Puerto Ricans have never been invited by Congress to make that choice. They are American citizens, but they are deprived of equal voting rights.

If Puerto Rico were a State, it would have six or seven representatives in Congress instead of one who cannot vote on the floor of the House. If Puerto Rico were a State, it would have two Senators instead of none. If Puerto Rico were a State, the people there would help to choose our President. Puerto Rico is, in fact, one of the largest populations in the entire world that has no say in choosing the leadership of its country, a democratic country. Now they cannot do anything like that. A host of policy decisions are made in Puerto Rico's name by us, by Congress and by the President, on behalf of Puerto Rico's people without their full or equal input or consent, and that is deeply, deeply unfair.

Whether Puerto Ricans decide in favor of statehood or not, there is an existing inequality that needs to be addressed. The people of Puerto Rico could have more representatives in Congress than they have today with or without statehood.

While I do not represent Puerto Rico, there is a very large Puerto Rican population in central Florida. But I am also here because people on the island of Puerto Rico have the right to full and equal representation. Under this legislation, voters will be asked by Congress whether they wish to maintain Puerto Rico's present form. If the majority of voters cast their ballots in favor of a different political status, the Government of Puerto Rico will be authorized to conduct a second vote among three options: independence, statehood, or sovereignty in association with the United States.

Residents of Puerto Rico have laid down their lives in defense of American democratic values for more than nine decades. In that time, they have never been given a chance to express their views about their political relationship with the United States by means of a fair, neutral, and democratic process. This must change. Therefore, I support this act.

□ 1515

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Chairman, having been elected in 2004 to come to Congress, I got here and met someone else who was elected to come to Congress at the same time named Luis Fortuno. The Fortunos were a couple of the most wonderful, lovely people I have ever met, and it's a real privilege to have gotten to know them. So my initial feeling is that I would want to support whatever they supported, especially to have a Republican governor in Puerto Rico. The things that he is doing are wonderful. Cutting government, working to reduce spending in Puerto Rico, those are the things that we need leaders to help with in Washington.

But we are a people who came into being through a belief in self-determination. And so on initially hearing that Puerto Rico would have a vote that would allow them to decide whether they wanted to be part of the United States as a State, my initial impression was this would be a good thing. But on seeing that it has been divided into two votes and finding that there are three choices in the second vote, I am very concerned.

If Puerto Rico wants to be a State, then they should decide to do so unequivocally and tell this body to do so unequivocally. It ought to be one question, "Do you want to be a State?" "Yes" or "no." And if the answer is loud and clear we do, then that's what we should take up. So regretfully, I will be voting "no" on this because I

am concerned this is not the way to decide a statehood's future. I will be voting "no."

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. I yield myself the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from New York is recognized for 3 minutes.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, there is a reason why two of the three main political parties in Puerto Rico are opposed to this bill. They have been shut out of the legislative process. That is the reason. Here we are facing one of the largest deficits in the history of this country because we have been paying for two wars where we are committed to promote democracy, and yet in our own backyard we are denying 8 million Puerto Rican Americans the right to self-determination.

As I stated before and I state it again, this is shameful and it is a disgrace. So let me just say that this bill is not ready for prime time. Let's treat Puerto Ricans with the same respect as we did to Alaskans, Hawaii, and other States. They decided by themselves what was better for them. This bill doesn't do that. For all these reasons, I ask my colleagues to vote "no."

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, as we conclude general debate, I want to make one point very, very clear. And that point is that we in Congress on a bipartisan basis welcomed the citizens of Puerto Rico to communicate to us their wishes. But, Mr. Chairman, this is not the right process for that.

I recognize this is not a vote on statehood. I never alluded to that. But, Mr. Chairman, we are setting, I think, a precedent where we are asking a territory of the United States if they want statehood. Looking back in the history, I found it pretty murky whether that even happened. What happened generally, and certainly in a vast majority of the 50 States that make up this great Union, is that they had a plebiscite and they decided they wanted to join this country, and then they asked the Congress to respond. We are doing this backwards.

There have been three votes in the history of this last century of Puerto Ricans, and in every case, in every case they did not choose statehood. So I don't know why we should be part of a process that from my point of view tilts the playing field in favor of statehood when in the past that hasn't been the case. The citizens of Puerto Rico right now, as I made in my opening remarks, can have a plebiscite. They can decide. They can decide by a statewide vote, they can have a constitutional convention, as my good friend from Illinois pointed out. There are a variety of ways for them to do that. We should allow them to do that.

Now, it's difficult. It's a difficult process. We all know that. Self-government is hard. But for goodness sakes, we shouldn't be party to what I believe is a process that is cinched in one way.

So for that reason, Mr. Chairman, I am going to vote "no" on this legislation, and I would urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I am honored to yield the balance of my time to the people's representative from Puerto Rico, Mr. PEDRO PIERLUISI.

Mr. PIERLUISI. It is time. It is time for this Congress to hear from the people of Puerto Rico. A lot has been said about this process of self-determination. And what is self-determination? It is to allow the people of Puerto Rico to express their wishes on their political destiny. H.R. 2499 does exactly that. The only possible options that the people of Puerto Rico have concerning the subject matter are the following: remaining as a territory, which is called a Commonwealth, but the label does not change the status. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is a Commonwealth, yet it is a State. Puerto Rico is a territory. And there is a clause in the United States Constitution that provides and has so been interpreted by the Supreme Court, the United States Supreme Court, that this Congress has plenary powers over the territories, including Puerto Rico. And we do not fail to exercise them on a daily basis, for better or worse, to the people of Puerto Rico, who do not have voting representation in this Congress, who do not vote for the President, and who do not participate in Federal programs on an equal basis with their fellow citizens in the States. That is one of the choices. And this bill, this plebiscite, the plebiscite in H.R. 2499, provides for that. If the people want to remain under the current status, they can, like they should be.

Now if the people of Puerto Rico say we no longer want to be a territory of the United States, we should know that, all Members of Congress. This bill then asks them their choice among the only three options that are accepted under U.S. and international law: statehood, independence, and there has been some talk about free association.

Let me tell you something. I agree with Congressman SERRANO. Libre asociación is that term in Spanish. In Puerto Rico everybody knows what libre asociación is. In fact, there is a faction within one of our main parties that advocates for that. And what is that? Simple; what Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, Palau already have—an association between Puerto Rico and the U.S. as sovereign nations that is not a territory of the United States. That option is included. So all the options are there. It is only fair to ask the people of Puerto Rico to express themselves in a way that is not binding on this Congress.

We will always have, the Congress will always have the last word on this topic, as it should be. So that's why I have put forth this bill before this Congress on behalf of the people of Puerto Rico as the only elected Representative

of the people of Puerto Rico, and I ask for your support. Vote for H.R. 2499.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2499, the Puerto Rico Democracy Act.

Puerto Rico is home to nearly 4 million Americans.

It has been a U.S. territory for 112 years and its residents have been U.S. citizens since 1917.

Puerto Ricans have contributed much to the basic fabric of this country in times of peace and war.

Its residents have served as high government officials and leaders from all walks of life.

More than one million Puerto Ricans live in my home state of New York, and according to the latest numbers, more than 60,000 live in my congressional district.

I am, therefore, proud to call myself a cosponsor of the bipartisan Puerto Rico Democracy Act.

I know that the question of the status of Puerto Rico has been difficult for many years, but that is precisely why we must address it today.

Under the current status, residents of Puerto Rico are bound by federal law, but cannot vote for president and do not have voting representation in Congress.

Since joining the American family over a century ago, the Island's residents have never been given the opportunity to express their views—in the context of a fair and orderly vote sponsored by Congress—as to whether Puerto Rico should remain a U.S. territory or should seek a non-territorial status.

H.R. 2499 allows the government of Puerto Rico to conduct plebiscites to ask voters if they wish to maintain the current status or have a different status.

I support this bill because it finally creates a fair process to allow the people of Puerto Rico to decide their own future for themselves.

Self-determination is a basic principle of the United States, and Puerto Ricans deserve no less.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the sponsor of this bill, Mr. PIERLUISI, for his excellent work, and I appreciate the efforts of members on both sides of the aisle who helped bring the Puerto Rico Democracy Act to the floor today.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2499. Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chair, I rise today as a cosponsor and to speak in strong support of H.R. 2499, The Puerto Rico Democracy Act of 2009, which establishes a just and fair way for Puerto Ricans to decide their relationship with the United States.

Puerto Rico has been a U.S. territory for 111 years and its residents have been U.S. citizens since 1917. Puerto Ricans have contributed immeasurably to the life of this nation in times of peace and war and have served as U.S. government officials, ambassadors, federal judges and military officers.

The island is home to nearly 4 million Americans who are subject to federal taxes as determined by law, pay income taxes on income from outside the island, as well as other taxes such as Social Security and Medicare.

Yet Puerto Ricans today still cannot vote for President of the United States and do not have full voting representation in Congress. I believe it is time for the people of Puerto Rico to decide their fate after over 100 years of political uncertainty.

H.R. 2499 would identify Puerto Rico's political status options and authorize a plebiscite process in which voters could express their preferences among those options. This bill will finally give them the opportunity to determine their relationship with the U.S. in the context of a fair, neutral and democratic process sponsored by Congress.

We must ensure that the views of all Puerto Ricans are heard on this fundamental question without excluding or favoring any status option. As a cosponsor of this bipartisan legislation, I support a fair and impartial process of self-determination for the people of Puerto Rico.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chair, I share Thomas Jefferson's belief that majority rule is "the vita principle of republics," therefore I am opposed to passage of H.R. 2499; and respectfully request that my name be withdrawn as a co-sponsor. I was mistaken in co-sponsoring this bill because it is not apparent from the language of the bill that it allows Puerto Rico to decide its future by less than a majority vote. I have also learned that current law enables Puerto Rico to hold an election to determine their future at any time, so this law is redundant—and we already have far too many redundant unnecessary laws on the books. For these reasons I would ask that my name be withdrawn as a cosponsor of this bill.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in the bill shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule and shall be considered read.

The text of the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 2499

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Puerto Rico Democracy Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. FEDERALLY SANCTIONED PROCESS FOR PUERTO RICO'S SELF-DETERMINATION.

(a) *FIRST PLEBISCITE.*—The Government of Puerto Rico is authorized to conduct a plebiscite in Puerto Rico. The 2 options set forth on the ballot shall be preceded by the following statement: "Instructions: Mark one of the following 2 options:

"(1) Puerto Rico should continue to have its present form of political status. If you agree, mark here ____."

"(2) Puerto Rico should have a different political status. If you agree, mark here ____."

(b) *PROCEDURE IF MAJORITY IN FIRST PLEBISCITE FAVORS OPTION 1.*—If a majority of the ballots in the plebiscite are cast in favor of Option 1, the Government of Puerto Rico is authorized to conduct additional plebiscites under subsection (a) at intervals of every 8 years from the date that the results of the prior plebiscite are certified under section 3(d).

(c) *PROCEDURE IF MAJORITY IN FIRST PLEBISCITE FAVORS OPTION 2.*—If a majority of the ballots in a plebiscite conducted pursuant to subsection (a) or (b) are cast in favor of Option 2, the Government of Puerto Rico is authorized to conduct a plebiscite on the following 3 options:

(1) *Independence:* Puerto Rico should become fully independent from the United States. If you agree, mark here ____.

(2) *Sovereignty in Association with the United States:* Puerto Rico and the United States

should form a political association between sovereign nations that will not be subject to the Territorial Clause of the United States Constitution. If you agree, mark here ____.

(3) *Statehood:* Puerto Rico should be admitted as a State of the Union. If you agree, mark here ____.

SEC. 3. APPLICABLE LAWS AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS.

(a) *APPLICABLE LAWS.*—All Federal laws applicable to the election of the Resident Commissioner shall, as appropriate and consistent with this Act, also apply to any plebiscites held pursuant to this Act. Any reference in such Federal laws to elections shall be considered, as appropriate, to be a reference to the plebiscites, unless it would frustrate the purposes of this Act.

(b) *RULES AND REGULATIONS.*—The Puerto Rico State Elections Commission shall issue all rules and regulations necessary to carry out the plebiscites under this Act.

(c) *ELIGIBILITY TO VOTE.*—Each of the following shall be eligible to vote in any plebiscite held under this Act:

(1) All eligible voters under the electoral laws in effect in Puerto Rico at the time the plebiscite is held.

(2) All United States citizens born in Puerto Rico who comply, to the satisfaction of the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission, with all Commission requirements (other than the residency requirement) applicable to eligibility to vote in a general election in Puerto Rico. Persons eligible to vote under this subsection shall, upon timely request submitted to the Commission in compliance with any terms imposed by the Electoral Law of Puerto Rico, be entitled to receive an absentee ballot for the plebiscite.

(d) *CERTIFICATION OF PLEBISCITE RESULTS.*—The Puerto Rico State Elections Commission shall certify the results of any plebiscite held under this Act to the President of the United States and to the Members of the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States.

(e) *ENGLISH BALLOTS.*—The Puerto Rico State Elections Commission shall ensure that all ballots used for any plebiscite held under this Act include the full content of the ballot printed in English.

(f) *PLEBISCITE COSTS.*—All costs associated with any plebiscite held under this Act (including the printing, distribution, transportation, collection, and counting of all ballots) shall be paid for by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

The CHAIR. No amendment to the committee amendment is in order except those printed in House Report 111-468. Each amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MS. FOXX

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 111-468.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 1 offered by Ms. Foxx:

Page 4, line 5, strike "3" and insert "4".

Page 4, after line 16, insert the following:

(4) *Commonwealth:* Puerto Rico should continue to have its present form of political status. If you agree, mark here ____.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 1305, the gentlewoman from

North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentlelady from the Virgin Islands for the purposes of a unanimous consent request.

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. I thank my colleague from North Carolina for yielding.

Mr. Chair, I rise in support of this amendment because it corrects the chief concern I have had about this bill—that Commonwealth is not given fair treatment in the base bill, H.R. 2499.

A cleaner process would have allowed all of the possible options to be on the ballot in one vote, with Commonwealth included.

In the first vote where one is asked to choose the status quo or change, first of all the deck is stacked against commonwealth, by those who support statehood, independence or free association.

I have reason to believe that most Puerto Ricans want Commonwealth with new enhancements, which is not the status quo. Therefore someone even voting for change in the first ballot might still have Commonwealth as their preference. But they would have no opportunity to vote for it. This is grossly unfair to what I think is the majority of the population.

H.R. 2499 is slanted toward statehood. For every option to have a level playing field Commonwealth must be added in the second vote.

I urge my colleagues to support the Foxx amendment.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, I would like to yield 15 seconds to the gentlelady from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

After being engaged in the spirited debate surrounding this bill, I am pleased to report that both supporters and opponents of the underlying bill, regardless of partisanship, can support the amendment I am offering. It's my belief that Congress has no business considering this bill at this time.

Puerto Ricans have voted on statehood three times without congressional action. Although congressional action is not needed, statehood advocates have defined this bill as necessary to providing a "congressionally sanctioned" vote process for Puerto Rico to determine its political status. However, if we are going to do this, we need to pass a bill that ensures fair consideration of all points of view.

Although the bill is being touted as one to allow Puerto Ricans the opportunity to exercise political self-determination, as it's currently written it denies commonwealth status quo supporters freedom to vote for their preferred option in the second stage of the plebiscite.

In the first stage of the plebiscite, Puerto Ricans are given two choices:

the status quo or change. It's easy to see how anyone, even Commonwealth status quo supporters, would support some sort of change in their political processes. However, consensus on this question would move to a second stage, where Puerto Ricans choose only from three options: statehood, independence, or sovereignty in association with the United States. These three options deny supporters of continuing the Commonwealth status quo the freedom to vote for their preferred political status. Whether they support statehood, independence, or the Commonwealth status quo, Puerto Ricans' views should be given equal and fair consideration.

My amendment very simply adds a fourth option: "Commonwealth: Puerto Rico should continue to have its present form of political status to the available voting options for the second stage of the plebiscite."

□ 1530

This amendment takes nothing from the bill, but adds an option to reflect the views held by a significant portion of Puerto Ricans who should not be disenfranchised by this bill. This is an amendment Members of all persuasions can support. Opponents of the bill can remain opposed, but take comfort in knowing the bill was made a little better. Supporters, or even cosponsors, can take comfort in knowing their bill was made even better.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from West Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, this bill was carefully crafted to give the people of Puerto Rico the opportunity to inform Congress for the first time ever whether they want to continue with their current temporary status, Commonwealth, or move to a permanent status: statehood, independence, or free association. This amendment would subvert this effort by including a choice to continue the island's present status among the options provided for in the bill's second plebiscite. Adoption of this amendment will contradict the bill's intent and make it less likely that the people of Puerto Rico would seek a permanent nonterritorial status.

Debate over Puerto Rico's status continues to be the central issue in politics on the island. The fairest and simplest way, we believe, to address this concern is to let Puerto Ricans choose to either retain their present status, as the underlying bill does; or, if they don't want to, allow them to elect to become a state, an independent country, or a free nation with association with the U.S. Allowing the choice of retaining their current status after it was rejected in the first plebiscite, as this amendment would do, only serves to confuse the process and would likely cause an inconclusive outcome.

I, therefore, urge defeat of the amendment and reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, my colleague says this bill has been carefully crafted. Yes, it's been carefully crafted to keep the people who want the present status from being a choice. That is wrong. That should not be the way this bill is done. If they want to keep the present status, they should be able to vote for it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I believe I have the right to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Could I inquire, Mr. Chairman, as to how much time I have left?

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from North Carolina has 2½ minutes remaining.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, I think this bill as it is crafted is not the right way to go for the people of Puerto Rico. I don't have a dog in this fight. I have not taken a position on whether they should have statehood or not have statehood, but I don't like the Congress of the United States being used to create a situation that disenfranchises people. And that's what's happening.

We are wasting our time doing this. We don't need to do it. The people of Puerto Rico can vote on this without our doing this. We should be dealing with what is important to the American people—jobs and other issues. This is not necessary for us to do.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 30 seconds to my colleague, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ).

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I'd just encourage my colleagues to listen to the argument on the other side. They don't want the status quo to be one of the options. This is supposed to be a bill about self-determination, yet it's this Congress that's going to force its will to determine what is even going to be on the ballot. This is fundamentally wrong. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this amendment.

Mr. RAHALL. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, can I inquire again as to how much time is left on my side?

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman has 1½ minutes remaining.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1¼ minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is a commendable effort to try and improve a deeply flawed piece of legislation, and I really thank the gentlewoman for being so committed to providing for a process of self-determination for the people of Puerto Rico. Elections are only democratic if the people are not blocked from choosing between all the options potentially available to them. One of the many shortcomings of this bill is that under the scheme it establishes, the second ballot will not include commonwealth as an option for voters.

Again, because what they want is for the people of Puerto Rico to vote for statehood instead of providing a fair, democratic process. That is undemocratic. It is un-American. That defies imagination. That is essentially telling the people of Puerto Rico that the system of government under which they currently live is not even an option for them to consider.

This approach ignores the fact that the Commonwealth is what the majority of the people of Puerto Rico have selected in the last three previous popular votes. The amendment offered by the gentlelady will take a good first step forward, and I am wholeheartedly in support of that amendment.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, again, I want to say that I think the Congress of the United States is being used unfairly in this process. We do not need to be doing this. What the proponents of statehood are doing is rigging the process in favor of a vote for statehood and they're using the Congress of the United States to establish the process for them. We don't need to be passing this bill. The people of Puerto Rico can vote without this bill.

Mr. RAHALL. Before I yield to the gentleman from Puerto Rico to close on our side, let me just address one issue the gentlelady from North Carolina raised about us having other issues that she alluded to which are more important than this issue to address in Congress, like jobs, the economy, et cetera; therefore, why are we considering this legislation. That may be true.

Certainly, jobs and the economy are very important to every one of our districts. But I think it should be worth pointing out here that it's most unfortunate that we can't get the type of bipartisan support—as much bipartisan support from the other side on those issues of jobs and the economy as we do on this particular piece of legislation.

I would yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI).

Mr. PIERLUISI. I rise in opposition to this amendment. The reason is rather straightforward. In a democracy, the majority rules. The threshold question, the first question that H.R. 2499 poses, is precisely to determine whether the majority of the people residing in Puerto Rico, the American citizens residing in Puerto Rico, want to remain as a territory. Once the majority speaks, we will abide by that. If the majority says they want change, they do not want to continue being a territory, called a commonwealth as it is, then it is only fair to ask a second question. Choose among the only available alternatives. The results will speak for themselves.

Some here seem to be convinced that the result will be that the people of Puerto Rico will choose statehood. It remains to be seen. We don't know the percentage. We don't know what other percentages we will have on the first vote, on the second vote. Let's allow the people of Puerto Rico to express

themselves. It is only fair. And the Congress will have the last word.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from North Carolina will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. GUTIERREZ

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 111-468.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer my amendment.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 2 offered by Mr. GUTIERREZ:

On page 4, line 5, strike "on the following 3 options:" and insert "on the following 4 options:".

On page 4, after line 16, insert the following:

"(4) None of the Above. If you agree, mark here ____."

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 1305, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Well, here we go again. They say this is a bill. The chairman of Natural Resources says this is a bill to make sure that the people of Puerto Rico are able to define their future and do it in a free, objective manner. Really? Well, the last time they had a plebiscite in Puerto Rico, guess which option won? None of the above. Guess which option they exclude? The winning option in the last plebiscite. So who's kidding who in this place?

They have this thing rigged from the beginning to the end. If not, if they were so faithful to the wishes, to the will, to the passion of the self-determination of the people of Puerto Rico, why aren't they including the very option that won? They say they respect the decision of American citizens on the island of Puerto Rico and we should give them an opportunity to express themselves freely in a referendum. Guess what? They did. And yet we reject the very option that they chose for themselves.

What kind of democracy is that? I don't know what kind of democracy that is in other States, but I know how I feel about it. None-of-the-above, for me, offers this wonderful opportunity to the people of Puerto Rico.

Just so that we understand, because everybody says things, I want to read this. This is what the Democrats say about my amendment—my own party:

you mislead voters into thinking there is a legally better alternative to Puerto Rico's political status other than an independent state or a sovereignty. Me? Me? I'm misleading people? What is the last option that won, adopted by the government of Puerto Rico, and voted on in Puerto Rico?

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR. The Chair notes a disturbance in the gallery in contravention of the law and rules of the House.

The Sergeant at Arms will remove those persons responsible for the disturbance and restore order to the gallery.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I know it's hard, but the truth is the truth.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR. The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings or other audible conversation is in violation of the rules of the House.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. The truth is that the last time one of the alternatives was exactly what I offer. If you really believe and you really trust and you really respect the judgment of the people of Puerto Rico, then include it as they included it when they were able to do it. If you say you're not imposing your will on them, then give them the option when they had the ability to choose the different options. I'm not asking for anything else other than that because I think that it is important and fundamental that we check into the history books.

Notice, no one, no one will contradict the fact that "none of the above" was the one that won, that that was one of the offers. And then they say that I mislead. I don't mislead anybody. The fact is, people say I'm doing this and that. That's okay. People like me, who defend the sovereign rights of the people of Puerto Rico, you know what happens to them in Puerto Rico? They get files on them by the Government of Puerto Rico. They get jailed. They are made sure they lose their jobs. They get sanctioned.

Everybody always says, Oh, why aren't there more people that believe in Puerto Rican independence? There's a lot of people that believe in Puerto Rican independence. More of them don't show themselves because when they do, you know what happens? Those that support other alternatives lock them up. Let me tell you something. Careful.

□ 1545

Mr. RAHALL. I rise in opposition to the amendment, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from West Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, as was the case with the Foxx amendment, this amendment would also add a fourth option to the second ballot in the two-stage plebiscite process. I urge defeat of this amendment as well,

largely along the same lines as the earlier amendment.

"None of the above" is the ultimate and unnecessary escape clause. The proposal for its inclusion on the ballot suggests that there exists some other option for permanently resolving Puerto Rico's status in a manner compatible with the U.S. Constitution beyond the three options of independence, sovereignty in association with the United States, or statehood. Such a belief defies the conclusions of the international community, the courts, and the executive branch.

There is no other viable option than the three to be presented on the second ballot as provided for in the underlying bill. Thus, this "none of the above" amendment is not about progress, but rather inconclusiveness. Self-determination for the people of Puerto Rico should no longer be thwarted by inconclusiveness nor held captive to any pursuit for a status change not deemed viable under the U.S. Constitution or international law.

I urge defeat of the amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. How much time do I have, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Illinois has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I thank the Chair. I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Utah.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chair and my colleagues, this amendment should pass unanimously. I don't care where you are on this issue. If you fundamentally believe that the people of Puerto Rico should be given a voice, then the voice that they should be able to allow, one of the boxes they should be allowed to check is "none of the above." Last time, 50.3 percent of the residents there voted in favor of this. It is not right for us to deny them the opportunity to check the box that says, "none of the above." This should pass unanimously.

I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote for this.

Mr. RAHALL. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I yield myself 1 additional minute, Mr. Chair.

I just want to make this abundantly clear to everyone, and I know that Mr. PIERLUISI, the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico who used to be the attorney general in Puerto Rico, understands this to be true. And if not, I would like him to step up and just say, Luis, you've got it wrong. Please tell me that.

This is what happened in 1998: "None of the above" was the option included in the 1998 plebiscite by the very sponsor, by the very party that the proponent of the legislation that comes before us today, Mr. PIERLUISI's party. They controlled the Governorship. They controlled the House. They controlled the Senate. They set up the parameters, and they included it. Yesterday they come and say to me that I am

being misleading about what is going on. And more than that, it's the option that won.

I also say fundamentally that one of the reasons I thought it was a good option was because I thought that it wasn't fair the way it was designed and the way it was construed. So I said, You know, I don't like the construction, so you should always give the people—especially people seeking self-determination—the option to say to us, the Congress, We didn't like the way you designed it, so we reject your proposal.

So let me use the last 30 seconds with this: I want you to look at this bill, and you are going to find a section that says that over 1 million Puerto Ricans born on the island of Puerto Rico that live in the United States—not in Puerto Rico—that live in the United States are guaranteed a ballot. What does that say to you?

There is a reason they speak Spanish, ladies and gentlemen. There's a reason they love the Puerto Rican flag. There's a reason they go to the Puerto Rican Day—there's a reason. It's okay. They have a passion for their culture, for their language, for who they are and their identity. And it is affirmed by the very proponent of this legislation, who understands that they are nationals—not of Puerto Rico, which you do not represent. But you are allowing them to participate in this process because you recognize they have an inherent right to participate in the future of Puerto Rico.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the people's representative from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI).

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Puerto Rico is recognized for 4 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. I rise in opposition to this amendment, and I rise in opposition because some of my colleagues here have been talking about one term, "free association," being an ambiguous term. Well, there cannot be anything more ambiguous than "none of the above" when you know that all the options that are available are the four options that we have been talking about.

The first option is for Puerto Rico to continue being a territory, and we all know what a territory is. Our Constitution provides for such. Puerto Rico is an unincorporated territory. That is an option. And there are only three other possible options as a matter of settled U.S. law and international law: independence, statehood, and free association. It serves no purpose, no real purpose to include a "none of the above" option when those are the options that we all know exist for the people of Puerto Rico.

If we want to effectuate self-determination, if we want to facilitate self-determination, if we want to give a voice to Puerto Rico, to the people of Puerto Rico, with a meaningful purpose, we cannot include a "none of the above" option. That was, indeed, the

result of the last plebiscite that was done in Puerto Rico, which did not follow the bill that this House approved or the Senate failed to act upon. It added this "none of the above" option, and what happened is, to this day, nobody can understand what that means. It served no purpose. That's why I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Illinois will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. GUTIERREZ

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 111-468.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 3 offered by Mr. GUTIERREZ:

In the header of section 3(e), strike "ENGLISH BALLOTS" and insert "LANGUAGE OF BALLOTS".

In section 3(e), strike "printed in English" and insert "printed in Spanish. Upon request by an eligible voter, the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission shall provide said eligible voter with a ballot printed in English".

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 1305, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlelady from New York, Congresswoman VELÁZQUEZ.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, this is a straightforward amendment, and it is very important that Congress needs to be certain that the people of Puerto Rico understand what is at stake and the options before them. This amendment will make sure that the ballots for these processes are available in both Spanish and English. Through this amendment, Puerto Rico's overwhelmingly Spanish-speaking population will be able to understand the ballot and exercise their vote. Those who reside on the island but are not fluent in Spanish will still have the opportunity to cast their ballot. They simply need to request one in English.

Mr. Chairman, this is a simple amendment, and it will provide for everyone to understand such an important process that is going to have such an incredible impact on the many people who live in Puerto Rico and those who do not live in Puerto Rico. So I urge its adoption.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from West Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, the pending amendment would strike the requirement from the bill that a ballot include the full content of the ballot printed in English. Instead, the amendment requires ballots to be printed in Spanish. An English ballot could be obtained only by the request of a voter.

The underlying bill strikes the right balance. We did address this issue during our full committee consideration of this legislation, and the underlying bill gives rise to the printing of a unified ballot. The amendment before us undoes that balance that we struck in the full committee in consideration of this issue, and it puts the onus on an English-proficient or otherwise English ballot-preferring voter to request such a ballot.

In my opinion, this would add tremendously to the administrative processing of the ballots; it would complicate the process, and it would add cost. It would be a tremendous cost addition to the process as well, and I would, therefore, urge the defeat of the amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Utah.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of this amendment. I believe that English should be the official language of the United States of America, but that's a different issue. Let's be realistic. The people in Puerto Rico predominantly speak Spanish. Let's provide a ballot to them in Spanish so that they can know what they're voting for. And the amendment provides that if anybody wants an English ballot, they can get an English ballot. I think that's fair. I think that's reasonable. It just allows the people of Puerto Rico to know what they're voting on. I think that's a simple request.

And there is no additional cost to the people of the United States of America, because I was able to pass an amendment in the committee that said that there will be no cost to the United States taxpayers here in the continental United States.

So again, I think it's reasonable. I rise in support of this and urge its support.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I yield myself 1½ minutes of my time.

I thank Mr. CHAFFETZ and I thank the gentlelady from New York for their comments.

Why do I propose this? Because we're getting hoodwinked again. That's all that's happening here. You know what they're going to do? I'm telling you, this is just like those derivatives that they've got at Goldman Sachs. You don't know what's in it. Look into it, because it's going to blow up on you later on.

Let me tell you why. Here's what it says on page 5. It says, "English ballots—the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission shall ensure that all ballots used for any plebiscite held under this act include the full content of the ballot printed in English." That's all it says.

Now, you know why they do that; to give you the misunderstanding, right, the false sense of confidence that people are actually going to go, and there's going to be a campaign, and it's going to be conducted in English, and the people can go and take an English ballot. The fact is that the ballots in Puerto Rico are printed in Spanish. The fact is—okay, let me give you another one.

There are, like, four big newspapers—well, there were four, but the one in English went bankrupt. The ones that thrive are the ones in Spanish. Did you ever turn the TV on in Puerto Rico? Go down there. There are, like, three or four really Puerto Rican stations. As a matter of fact, public TV in Puerto Rico is in Spanish. The news is in Spanish, and we help provide some of the funding through our contributions—not the Congress of the United States necessarily.

The fact is that I am here to affirm, to affirm, and I hope that this Congress recognizes that the people of Puerto Rico are a nation. They have a language. We should respect that language, and that language is Spanish. And as we move forward, the ballots, in order for them to understand this process, should be in Spanish.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. How many more speakers does the gentleman have remaining?

Mr. RAHALL. I just have one concluding speaker.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Well, it's very clear that every time we have an amendment, they want to, like, finish it up. But that's okay. It's been unfair from the very beginning, so what's a little more unfairness.

The fact is, I was a schoolteacher there. I was an elementary schoolteacher for 2 years in Puerto Rico. Do you know how much time the children in the public school system—which we support, taxpayers of the United States support. Do you know how much time during the day they speak in English? One class out of six. You know how I know? I spent 50 minutes a day teaching them English for almost 2 years. And you know what, the students used to walk in, and they used to say, "Oh, Mr. Ingles." It was like the math class. It was like the biology class. It was like the class they didn't want to take.

But you know something, that doesn't mean that they necessarily don't love this country. It's just that they affirm who they are, and we should respect that. They're Puerto Ricans, a colony of Spain, and have Spanish as their predominant lan-

guage. Let's respect that cultural linguistic integrity in Puerto Rico.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1600

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the people's representative from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI).

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Chairman, I have heard here, and it is unfortunate, some colleagues talk about this being rigged, using terms of that nature. And I can take it because I know that this is a fair bill.

Now I just heard that somehow we are opposing this amendment because of the way that this bill is drafted. Let me say for the record of this House that the language that provides for having the ballots in both Spanish and English was offered in committee, in the Committee of Natural Resources at the markup by Mr. HENRY BROWN from South Carolina who belongs to the Republican Party. And we voted on it.

The reason I am opposing this amendment is it is totally unnecessary. As a matter of local law in Puerto Rico, we need to provide the ballots in both English and Spanish, and that is what we are doing. We are just being fair. This amendment requires as an alternative that now we need to print separate ballots in English and force those who feel more comfortable with the English language to request them. It is not necessary. We oppose it. I oppose it. And that's all I'll say. I needn't say anymore.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Illinois will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. BURTON OF INDIANA

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 111-468.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Chairman, Mr. YOUNG and I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 4 offered by Mr. BURTON of Indiana:

Amend section 3(e) to read as follows:

(e) ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS.—The Puerto Rico State Elections Commission shall—

(1) ensure that all ballots used for any plebiscite held under this Act include the full content of the ballot printed in English;

(2) inform persons voting in any plebiscite held under this Act that, if Puerto Rico retains its current political status or is admitted as a State of the United States, the official language requirements of the Federal Government shall apply to Puerto Rico in

the same manner and to the same extent as throughout the United States; and

(3) inform persons voting in any plebiscite held under this Act that, if Puerto Rico retains its current political status or is admitted as a State of the United States, it is the Sense of Congress that it is in the best interest of the United States for the teaching of English to be promoted in Puerto Rico as the language of opportunity and empowerment in the United States in order to enable students in public schools to achieve English language proficiency.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 1305, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) and a Member opposed will each control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is an amendment I think that everybody will embrace, at least I hope so, because it clarifies what was just discussed. I will read it to you real quickly. It says this amendment would retain the requirement that all ballots used for authorized plebiscites include the full content of the ballot printed in English as well as Spanish. It would also require the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission to inform voters in all authorized plebiscites that if Puerto Rico retains its current status or is admitted as a State that: (1) any official language requirements of the Federal Government shall apply to Puerto Rico to the same extent as throughout the United States; and (2) it is the sense of Congress that the teaching of English be promoted, not demanded or anything, but be promoted in Puerto Rico in order for English-language proficiency to be achieved.

So we are talking about making sure that everybody who votes, everybody who is involved in any kind of an official thing like a plebiscite, that they will see it in both English and Spanish. We are also pushing to promote English more than it has been in the past. I think this is an amendment that everybody should agree with.

I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I strongly support this amendment. This is the same amendment we had 12 years ago. It does promote Spanish and it does promote English. This is nothing new. Right now in my State we are printing our ballots in my State in different languages within the State. This is an amendment everybody should accept, except if you are just adamantly opposed to the legislation, as some people are.

I have spent some time in Puerto Rico, not as much time as some others, but I find an awful lot of Puerto Ricans who do use English. I think that is a blessing. I am one who thinks everybody should speak two or three languages if they can. This amendment is the right way to go, and all of the plebiscites will be in both languages,

not one language, so those who speak English and Spanish and those who speak Spanish and English, both of them have a right to read and understand what they are voting on. It is the right bill. It is the right amendment. Let's vote on both things.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I rise to claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Washington is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I want to say that this amendment is unnecessary, and really it masquerades a whole debate on English, and let me explain why. This amendment has essentially three components, and I will paraphrase what those components are. They talk about all ballots used in the plebiscite must be in English, number one. Number two, prospective voters are informed that the official language requirements of the Federal Government shall apply to Puerto Rico. And number three, it has a sense of Congress that it is in the best interest to promote English.

Now let me address each of those issues but let me suggest that I believe this amendment is offered to only deny a straight up-or-down vote on the issue of English as the official language.

First of all, the language that my good friend from Indiana read in support of this amendment is already in the bill. It is on page 5. It says that the plebiscite will be carried out in English. So we don't need that because it is already in the bill.

The second provision is really meaningless. That is the one that talks about Federal language requirements. We know there is no Federal requirement in this country as to English, even though 30 States have adopted that. There is no official one from the United States. There should be, but there isn't.

Finally, I will concede at least a little point. The sense of Congress language really has no statutory effect, but I will concede this: It is at least timely. Why do I say that, because just 3 days ago the Secretary of Education in Puerto Rico said: "English is taught in Puerto Rico as if it were a foreign language."

In the 2005 Census, 85 percent of Puerto Ricans said they had very little knowledge of English. As a practical matter, in the Commonwealth legislature, and in its courts and classes in public schools, Spanish is the primary language. So there is nothing in this amendment that will change that. What should have happened and didn't happen is the Rules Committee denied a straight up-or-down vote on English as official language. That was embodied in Mr. BROWN of Georgia's amendment. But unfortunately we were denied the opportunity because this is a structured rule to at least have a debate on that. If the intent of the Rules Committee is to say this is the one we should have, I totally dis-

agree with that. So for that reason, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I think the amendment speaks for itself. I think the amendment, Mr. Chairman, says very clearly that we want to make sure that everyone who casts a ballot in an election or on a plebiscite has before them the ability to understand what the ballot is about and be able to cast it intelligently. This is done in all kinds of States. As a matter of fact, many States have as many as 11 different languages, which is really out of control, on one ballot. To say you can't have two on this ballot in Puerto Rico so they can cast their ballot intelligently really doesn't make much sense.

I am a very strong advocate for making sure that everyone in this country speaks English, and I understand what my colleague just said, but in this particular case we are talking about a plebiscite that is going to be advisory for the Congress of the United States. This is just to help this process along and to make sure that it is understood by everybody.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ).

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I am happy the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) brought this amendment up. I think it should be soundly defeated, but I am happy he brought it because it just demonstrates the imperialist nature. Here we are in the empire, the Congress of the United States, plenary powers over Puerto Rico, dictating what language they have to use.

You know what, it's amazing, but I'm not surprised, Mr. BURTON, because I understand the people of Indiana are still a little angry at the people of Puerto Rico when they arrested Bobby Knight. Bobby Knight got arrested in Puerto Rico. I think this is an important story to tell you. He got arrested in Puerto Rico. There were Pan American games, and the basketball team from the United States was competing against the basketball team from Cuba, and Bobby Knight went into a rage because all of the fans in the stadium in Puerto Rico, all American citizens, were clapping and cheering for the Cuban team and not the American team. So he said to himself: What's wrong with these people? And he threw a chair, as he likes to do, and he got arrested. There is an arrest warrant, and I don't know, maybe Mr. PIERLUISI can tell us if the arrest warrant is still valid and out there since he was the attorney general. It just tells you they're a nation, they're a people, and they affirm who they are in every instance.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I don't know what that has to do with anything, but I yield to Mr. PIERLUISI for 1 minute.

Mr. PIERLUISI. I rise in support of this amendment. It is a sensible

amendment. It basically provides that whatever legal requirements apply in the States will apply in Puerto Rico on this issue.

At the same time, it expresses a sense of Congress that we should improve the teaching of English in Puerto Rico. I am all for that. Ninety percent of the parents in Puerto Rico want to improve the teaching of English in Puerto Rico to their children. I have two bills pending before this Congress seeking additional funding, one, and the other creating a teacher exchange program so that we have more English teachers in Puerto Rico.

This is not an issue. We have two official languages in Puerto Rico, English and Spanish, the same way Hawaii has two official languages. We want all of our children to be fluent in English and to facilitate the government processes in Puerto Rico to the extent necessary so any English speakers will be well served.

So I support the amendment that has been offered by the gentleman from Indiana as well as the gentleman from Alaska.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I have 1 minute left and I have the right to close; is that correct?

The CHAIR. The gentleman is correct.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield 45 seconds to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN).

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to this amendment because it is a hollow amendment. No territory with an official language other than English has ever been admitted to the Union. Why this time?

Instead of reporting the English amendment I offered as a condition of statehood, the Rules Committee reported out a much watered down alternative English amendment which is opposed by every major pro-English group in the country. Unlike my amendment which required English as a condition of statehood, the Burton-Young amendment only encourages English to be taught without any enforcement.

Further, this amendment states that if Puerto Rico is admitted to the United States, the official language requirements of the Federal Government shall apply to Puerto Rico to the extent as throughout the United States. We don't have anything. That's totally useless.

This would be a great provision if the United States had an official language. Unfortunately, we do not. I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this amendment.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Chairman, I will take my last 30 seconds to say that the gentleman from Georgia has a very strong accent, but I understand him.

I would just like to say that this is a clarifying amendment to make sure that everybody who votes down there in a plebiscite or in an election has be-

fore them the ability to understand and cast the vote intelligently. I can't understand why anybody would be opposed to this. It makes common sense, and I hope everybody will support it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1615

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself the balance of my time, which is 15 seconds.

Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, the pertinent part of this amendment is already in the bill, and that speaks to the ballot; the other two are really meaningless. Frankly, this amendment does not even need to be considered today; but if it's a cover, then it's a cover, and let's call it what it is.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Indiana will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MS. VELÁZQUEZ

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in House Report 111-468.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. I have an amendment at the desk, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 5 offered by Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

Page 5, strike line 8 and all that follows through "Persons eligible" on line 13 and insert the following:

(2) An individual residing outside of Puerto Rico, if the individual—

(A)(i) is a resident of the United States, including a resident of any territory, possession, or military or civilian installation of the United States, at the time the plebiscite is held; and

(ii) would be eligible to vote in the plebiscite but for the individual's residency outside of Puerto Rico;

(B) was born in Puerto Rico; or

(C) has at least one parent who was born in Puerto Rico.

This paragraph shall apply notwithstanding any rule or regulation issued under subsection (b). Persons eligible

Page 6, after line 7, add the following:

(g) RECOGNITION OF RIGHT TO VOTE.—Congress recognizes the right of Puerto Ricans residing outside of Puerto Rico to vote in any plebiscite held under this Act and requests the Commonwealth Elections Commission of Puerto Rico to devise methods and procedures for such Puerto Ricans, including those born in, or having at least one parent born in, Puerto Rico, to register for and vote in absentia.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 1305, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, today the nation of Puerto Rico is 8 million people strong; 4 million reside on islands of Puerto Rico and 4 million live in the United States.

From Florida to New York City to Chicago to California, and everywhere in between, there are Puerto Rican communities across our Nation. Those Puerto Ricans who have been born in the United States are no less Puerto Rican than the ones that reside on the island. All of us, regardless of where we were born or raised, have a deep and abiding connection with our cultural home.

Puerto Ricans raised on the mainland often speak Spanish. They are taught about their culture, history, and where they come from. There are Puerto Rico Day parades in New York City, Chicago, Orlando, Hartford, and cities across this land. Regardless of where they were born, all Puerto Ricans are deeply vested in the political future of the island. I was born and raised in Puerto Rico, but that does not make me more Puerto Rican than Mr. GUTIERREZ.

Clearly, there is an air bridge between the United States and Puerto Rico. Puerto Ricans have relatives and family members living in Puerto Rico. And those Puerto Ricans living in the States possess their own sense of identity, which is shaped by and tied to Puerto Rico.

This amendment would allow Puerto Ricans living on the mainland to participate in the plebiscite that is called for under the bill. Importantly, the amendment requires that those wishing to vote be able to prove, by birth certificate, that they have at least one parent born in Puerto Rico. This will provide a safeguard against voter fraud while ensuring that we do not disenfranchise Puerto Ricans living in the States from this process.

Mr. Chairman, Puerto Ricans living on the mainland are no less Puerto Rican than those born and raised on the islands. We should not deny them a voice or a vote as this process, which is so important to the Puerto Rican nation, moves forward. These Puerto Ricans cannot be denied their right of self-determination.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Puerto Rico is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. The bill before us is a product of careful deliberation. We worked hard in reaching the right and correct balance in terms of determining who should be eligible to vote in the plebiscites provided for in the bill.

Before reporting it, the committee considered, as we had in previous Puerto Rico status bills, which voters should be participating, and we had to strike a balance. The bill makes both

residents of Puerto Rico who are otherwise eligible to vote under Puerto Rico electoral law and U.S. citizens who were born in Puerto Rico but who may not reside in the territory at the time of the plebiscite eligible to vote.

The committee recognized that a substantial number of individuals born in Puerto Rico but not currently residing there hope to return to live in Puerto Rico one day. Accordingly, they can be said to have a practical stake in helping to determine Puerto Rico's future political status. Such argument does not hold, though, for those who are of Puerto Rican descent but who were born outside of the territory, which the pending amendment would allow. The bill chooses place of birth rather than ethnic identity as the eligibility criteria. I urge this criterion to be maintained and that this amendment be rejected.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman has 2½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Puerto Rico has 3½ minutes remaining.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) such time as he may consume.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I thank the gentlelady.

Well, let's have a little talk here. There's a difference: here's citizenship, here's nationality, here's citizenship, here's nationality. They should not be confused. Ask the people in Ireland; they were subjects of the Queen; therefore, they were citizens. But they were always Irish. Ask the people of Ukraine. They may have been subjects of the Soviet Union and citizens of the Soviet Union and have a passport, but they never stopped being Ukrainian, they never stopped being Lithuanian. Look what happened in Yugoslavia once you got rid of Tito. We all saw everybody engage in their national pride. That's what we do, too: we assert it.

As a matter of fact, the very proponents of this legislation affirm that I'm right, they recognize it; otherwise, why would you allow people outside of the jurisdiction of Puerto Rico to vote and to determine its future unless you invested in them, unless they inherently had in themselves the nationality of Puerto Rican?

The gentleman from Puerto Rico says separation from ethnicity. I'm not an ethnic Puerto Rican. I might be a lot more Puerto Rican than some Puerto Ricans are. I suggest the gentleman come to my city of Chicago. In the Puerto Rican community there are many American flags, but there are two huge Puerto Rican flags. Don't divide the Puerto Rican nation; it is a nation of people. It may decide that it wants to incorporate itself into the United States of America, but it always is a nation of people with the inalienable right to independence. Don't divide our community.

If you look at my birth certificate, it says Puerto Rico twice on it—mom born in Puerto Rico, dad born in Puerto Rico. Then it says Chicago, Illinois. Nine months earlier, I would have been in Puerto Rico, so I'm separated by 9 months. And yet every fabric of who I am has a relationship to that wonderful, beautiful island: its music, its artistry, its poetry, its patriots. As a matter of fact, one of the most beautiful songs ever written about Puerto Rico was written in the United States of America and the longing for returning to that island.

Just think a moment, just think, think of the exodus of Puerto Ricans that left Puerto Rico in the 1950s during Operation Bootstrap. What did they do? Did they come to the United States and say, oh, great, we're in the United States; we're going to stay here forever and die here? No. The longing was to return one day to that island. Allow them the vote on the future of that island.

Mr. PIERLUISI. May I inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The CHAIR. The gentleman has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. PIERLUISI. In listening to the gentleman from Illinois, I keep hearing that he wants Puerto Rico to become independent, that he sees Puerto Rico as a nation. So be it. That's a dignified status, and that is one of the options that this bill provides for.

In crafting the bill, we tried to be as inclusive as we could, recognizing that Puerto Ricans, people born in Puerto Rico, might be interested in participating in this plebiscite, might want to return to Puerto Rico; and for the purpose of being as fair and as democratic as we could, we drew the line on requiring birth in Puerto Rico. More than that, we think it would be too encompassing and not necessary.

So I oppose this amendment. I believe that the current bill is fair; it might not be perfect, like any piece of legislation. You draw lines when you're legislating, but this is a reasonable line.

I oppose this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MS. VELÁZQUEZ

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in House Report 111-468.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 6 offered by Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

Page 3, strike line 8 and all that follows through line 5 on page 4 and insert the following:

(a) AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT PLEBISCITE.—The Government of Puerto Rico is authorized to conduct a plebiscite on the following 4 options:

Page 4, after line 16, insert the following:

(4) Commonwealth: Puerto Rico should continue to have its present form of political status. If you agree, mark here ____.

(b) RUNOFF PROCESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If no option receives votes on more than 50 percent of the ballots cast, the Government of Puerto Rico shall conduct a runoff process to permit voters to select among the 2 options that received the most votes.

(2) OPTION TO SELECT NONE OF THE ABOVE.—In a runoff process conducted under this subsection, voters shall be permitted to vote for—

(A) the option that received the most votes;

(B) the option that received the second most votes; or

(C) neither of those options.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 1305, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I am a strong believer that the people are smart enough to make tough decisions if they are presented with all the facts clearly and objectively. This legislation does not provide a transparent process of the choices available to Puerto Rico. That is not democracy by any definition.

A true system of democracy does not preclude certain options from a ballot, nor does it structure votes in a way to manipulate an electorate. Unfortunately, as we all know, this legislation structures the votes in a way that will prevent a commonwealth option from receiving fair consideration.

The process that allowed for the creation of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico was adopted by Congress. It is a legitimate form of government that is accepted by millions. I, therefore, find it appalling that this Congress will consider precluding a commonwealth as an option for the people of Puerto Rico.

Mr. Chairman, joining our Union as a new State is not a step that should result from electoral tricks or engineering. Joining the United States of America must be a decision that a people undertake deliberately, knowingly, and voluntarily. If the people of Puerto Rico wish to become a State, that option should be able to prevail against all other choices. The people should affirm, in a single vote, that they wish to move in that direction. They should not be presented with a series of false choices that are rigged to force the electorate into choosing statehood.

Under this amendment, there would be an opportunity for a real vote, with all the options on the table. This

amendment eliminates the first round vote and adds commonwealth as a choice for voters. It also provides for a runoff process if no option receives a majority of votes.

If the supporters of statehood and the authors of this bill truly believe that they have the will of the people on their side, then this amendment should cause them no concern. All this amendment will do is provide a chance for the people to vote on the future of the island with all the options before them, including commonwealth. To effectively preclude commonwealth from this process is to deny the Puerto Rican people a true right to self-determination.

I urge you to vote "yes" on this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1630

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Puerto Rico is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to the amendment because I believe it will muddy the waters of an otherwise clear choice that would be presented to the voters of Puerto Rico.

I also rise with tremendous respect for my colleagues and friends, Congresswoman NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ and Congressman LUIS GUTIERREZ, while at the same time rising in strong support of H.R. 2499, the Puerto Rico Democracy Act.

Puerto Rico has been a U.S. territory for 111 years, and its residents have been U.S. citizens since 1917. Puerto Ricans have a rich history of service to our Nation. They have served honorably in our military as Federal officials and as ambassadors. Our newest member of the Supreme Court, Justice Sonia Sotomayor, is of Puerto Rican descent. Yet, in all of this time, the people of Puerto Rico have never been given the chance to express their views about the island's political relationship with the United States in a meaningful vote sponsored by Congress.

Because H.R. 2499 embodies the commitment to democracy that defines our Nation, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting "yes."

I am proud that 20 of the bill's co-sponsors hail from my State of Florida. The bill has received overwhelming bipartisan support from my State's delegation because of the close relationship between Florida and Puerto Rico. My district alone is home to more than 30,000 individuals of Puerto Rican descent, many of whom travel frequently to the island to visit family members. Companies in my district and across Florida regularly conduct business with those located in Puerto Rico.

Despite the close family and business ties that bind many in my district with

Puerto Rico, our two peoples are different in one critical respect: The residents of Puerto Rico, despite being citizens of the United States, cannot vote for President and do not have voting representation in Congress. They also cannot access all Federal programs to the same extent as can the residents of the States.

H.R. 2499 would at long last give the people of Puerto Rico this opportunity. The bill authorizes the government of Puerto Rico to conduct an initial plebiscite. Voters would be asked whether they wished to maintain the current status or to choose a different status. The rationale for this plebiscite is simple.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I yield to the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. The issue here is not if the people of Puerto Rico can vote or not in Presidential elections. The issue here is a true, transparent, democratic process for the Puerto Rican people to participate in a referendum without imposing statehood.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Chairman, in reclaiming my time, I believe that this legislation would at long last give the people of Puerto Rico the opportunity that they have not been given before. It authorizes the government of Puerto Rico to conduct an initial plebiscite. It gives the people of Puerto Rico a chance to weigh in on whether they wish to keep their status the same or to change their status.

Congress needs to give the people of Puerto Rico access to participatory democracy, and this legislation does exactly that. It will create a process for the citizens of Puerto Rico to decide their own political status. If the majority of voters cast their ballots in favor of a different political status, the government of Puerto Rico would be authorized to conduct a second plebiscite which would include independence or statehood.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting "yes" on H.R. 2499.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time remains?

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from New York has 2¼ minutes remaining.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN).

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment.

I agree that the people of Puerto Rico deserve the opportunity to have a process whereby they can indicate their status preference, but I also agree that the way the vote is set up in the base bill is slanted towards a statehood outcome. This is the third Puerto Rico status bill that has been introduced since I've been in Congress, and while I consider H.R. 2499 to come closest to providing a plebiscite in which all options would be equally treated, it is not quite there yet.

Whether one supports commonwealth or improvements of the current commonwealth or not, I think everyone would agree that the process should be fair and that it should enable the people of Puerto Rico to express their preference for clear, equally treated options. This amendment does that, and I think the runoff with the two receiving the most votes and none of the above provides an additional level that ensures that no one is forced to choose between options, neither of which they support.

I look forward to supporting the status option that the people of Puerto Rico select, but I would have reservations in doing so if it were arrived at through a flawed process. This amendment is an attempt to fix that flaw, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, in closing, I will simply say that the authors of this bill are not afraid of having the people of Puerto Rico freely express themselves in a process that is democratic and that is transparent. They should support this amendment. Yet, if they are afraid that the only way they can get a simple majority that supports statehood is by denying the people of Puerto Rico the choice to vote for commonwealth, they know that history is on the side of the people of Puerto Rico. Repeatedly, every time plebiscites have been conducted in Puerto Rico, the commonwealth status has won, and statehood has been defeated. That is why they are so afraid, and that is why they are denying the right of the people of Puerto Rico to true self-determination.

I urge my colleagues to support and to vote for this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Chairman, I am in opposition to the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York.

This amendment would replace the plebiscite process authorized by the bill with an entirely new process, including a runoff with a problematic none-of-the-above option, which is unsound, confusing, and unlikely to produce a clear expression of the voters' views on the status question.

I urge my colleagues to reject this amendment. The amendment would delete the two-step process authorized by the bill, and it would replace it with a one-step process that uses the term "commonwealth" to denote Puerto Rico's current status.

As I said before, the term "commonwealth" is the legal name. It is the title given to the territory of Puerto Rico. Including the term when giving the people of Puerto Rico an option is confusing in and of itself, particularly because it could imply that it is more than what it is. This has been debated long enough. A territory is a territory is a territory. Call it whatever you may.

By limiting the plebiscites I authorize to one, the amendment fails to accomplish one of the primary purposes

of the bill: to determine whether the people of Puerto Rico consent to an arrangement that, whatever its other merits, does not provide them with self-government at the national level. The amendment includes a runoff process that provides for a none-of-the-above option. By including this option, the amendment undermines the purpose of the legislation, which is to enable a fair and informed process of self-determination for the people of Puerto Rico. "None of the above" is not a valid status. The last plebiscite provided that, and to this day, we cannot even interpret it. Including it on any ballot misleads voters into thinking that there is a possible alternative to the three available options.

I urge Members to vote "no" on this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MS. VELÁZQUEZ

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 7 printed in House Report 111-468.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 7 offered by Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Puerto Rico Democracy Act of 2010".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Congress respects the self-determination right of the people of Puerto Rico to choose their future relationship to the United States.

(2) Congress pledges not to dissuade, influence, or dictate a status option to the people of Puerto Rico.

(3) Congress will respectfully postpone consideration of the Puerto Rico status question until it receives an official proposal from the people of Puerto Rico to revise the current relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States that was made through a democratically held process by direct ballot.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that the Government of Puerto Rico can proceed to conduct a plebiscite in Puerto Rico. The 2 options set forth on the ballot may be preceded by the following statement: "Instructions: Mark one of the following 2 options:

"(1) Puerto Rico should conduct a plebiscite to determine a future proposal for the political status of Puerto Rico. If you agree, mark here ____.

"(2) Puerto Rico should NOT conduct a plebiscite to determine a future proposal for

the political status of Puerto Rico. If you agree, mark here ____."

Amend the title so as to read: "A bill to express the sense of Congress that the Government of Puerto Rico can proceed to conduct a plebiscite in Puerto Rico, and for other purposes."

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 1305, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, self-determination is a basic concept in a democracy. The ability of a people to choose their own national grouping without undue influence from another country is rightly recognized as a core element of freedom and liberty. Today, sadly, we are debating legislation that turns its back on this principle.

Perhaps what is most unfortunate is that what we are debating today involves imposing ideas from the outside onto the island. It seems to me, if we wish to keep faith with the democratic tradition of self-determination, then we will look for the guide to Puerto Rico's future, not in the House of Congress and not in Washington, D.C., but in Puerto Rico.

The amendment that I am offering will honor the concept of self-determination. This amendment empowers the people of Puerto Rico to submit their own proposal for moving forward. The amendment expresses the sense of Congress that we should not proceed until we have heard from those most affected by this debate, the Puerto Rican people. The residents of Puerto Rico should exercise freely and without congressional interference. The right to self-determination and this amendment recognize their rights. Rather than having Congress approve a bill that says to the Puerto Rican people that their relationship with the United States must change, this amendment sends a different message. It says to the Puerto Rican nation: We trust you to decide your future.

If they envision a better alternative than the status quo, then let them come to Congress and tell us. That is true self-determination. That is a process that will be viewed as legitimate by all parties in Puerto Rico, and it is a far cry from a bill that forces the Puerto Rican people to take a series of sham votes which are aimed at achieving a predetermined outcome.

Mr. Chairman, I ask my colleagues to honor the democratic tradition of self-determination. I urge Members to vote "yes" on this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from West Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, this amendment does nothing to further the goal of H.R. 2499, which is to provide the people of Puerto Rico with a federally recognized process to allow them to freely express their wishes regarding

their future political status in a congressionally recognized referendum.

The amendment recognizes that Puerto Rico can conduct a plebiscite on whether to conduct a plebiscite on a status option or options, and it calls on Congress to "respectfully postpone consideration" of the issue until it receives a proposal for revision of the current U.S.-Puerto Rican relationship voted for by Puerto Ricans.

We are all aware of the fact that Puerto Rico can conduct its own plebiscites. There is no disputing this fact. In fact, they have done so multiple times in the past, most recently in 1998, but because some of those were local referenda, which included definitions of the various status choices that were inaccurate and likely not to be supported by Congress, the results were inclusive, which brings us to the need of the bill pending before us.

We have an obligation to provide the people of Puerto Rico with a process that, more likely than not, will lead to a final resolution of the question of their political status, a question with which we have been grappling for more than a century. The amendment of the gentlewoman fails this test, and, for this reason, it should be defeated.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ).

The CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 2½ minutes.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I thank the gentlewoman. We have been working very closely together.

Mr. Chairman, this is a wonderfully crafted amendment, but I think that it is very important that the Congress respects the self-determination of the people of Puerto Rico to choose their future relationship with the United States or without the United States but to decide their future relationship.

This is the key pledge: Congress pledges not to dissuade, to influence, or to dictate a status option to the people of Puerto Rico.

Look, in my first election in Puerto Rico, I represented the Puerto Rican Independence Party. I was 19 years old in San Sebastian del Pepino. I was a delegate for that party until the first election. There was one vote for the Puerto Rican Independence Party in my polling place, what they call "Integro"—right?—just for independence. That was mine at that point.

I went to the university. I used to sell Claridad when I was at the university, and I would sell it to others. I've been a proponent of Puerto Rican independence. I got a nice, little carpeta, too—right?—and I haven't called the FBI yet to see what long list of things they've written down about me and who I've associated with, but let me tell you something:

The gentleman from Puerto Rico knows that everything is not all fair and square in Puerto Rico. There is an adage in Puerto Rico—right?—which is

don't get together with those people or you will be fingered. Do you know what? 1.8 million pages. You know, my dad was right. They had figured us out. They had said who we were. Do you know what would happen? You couldn't get a job. You couldn't be a teacher. You couldn't be anybody prominent in the society of Puerto Rico.

So I am here to say, for all of those who fought for the independence of Puerto Rico and for its right to join as a sovereign nation in the world of nations, don't do this. Don't dictate.

□ 1645

Please note that although I have always been an advocate, I have never come before this Congress to dictate my opinion, to dictate an outcome which benefits me. Let me tell you something. You think you've got a definition for the commonwealth that you can destroy? I have got a definition for independence that I can sell also. But I think it would be wrong to do it. I think it would be unfair to do it.

What the gentlewoman from New York is simply doing here is saying return this process to the people of Puerto Rico.

As I come up here every time, "Founding Fathers," "Founding Fathers," "Founding Fathers." Then they ask you who is your favorite Founding Father? And no one can name one.

Let me tell you something about the Founding Fathers. They had a Constitutional Convention. Let's allow the spirit of the Founding Fathers to act in Puerto Rico.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI).

The CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 3½ minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York.

This amendment is in the nature of a substitute and seeks to postpone an informed self-determination process along the viable status options in Puerto Rico. Postpone. Delay.

We've waited long enough. We have been waiting for 112 years.

In addition, it basically opts out. This is an opt-out. Congress is basically saying I'm not going to deal with this. Easy for Congress to do, but it is not the right thing.

Congress should be engaged in this process like it has never done before. Why? There are 4 million American citizens living in that territory, and they are being discriminated against every day in legislation that is pending before the Congress. If they want to live under those conditions, so be it. They should tell this Congress. But if they want a different status, nonterritorial, they should be given the chance also to express themselves along those lines. And the options are clear.

The gentleman from Illinois, it looks like he favors one of those options, independence for Puerto Rico. He keeps

talking about Puerto Rico's being a nation and so on. I respect that. If that's the will of the majority of the people of Puerto Rico, I am sure this Congress will respect it as well. But there are two other options. Yes, free association, it has been done before, and in Puerto Rico, people know very well what free association is all about. And the other one is statehood. There has been lots of talk about statehood here. And what I tell to all those who have raised concerns about the potential admission of Puerto Rico as a State is that we're not there yet. When we get there, then we will address it. But at least this bill allows the people of Puerto Rico to express their will. What is more democratic than that? What is fairer than that? Nothing. To simply say we're not going to get involved in this, solve it among yourselves, easy way out, but that's not fair. We've waited long enough.

I rise in opposition to this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF WASHINGTON

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 111-468.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order under the rule.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 8 offered by Mr. HASTINGS of Washington:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Puerto Rico Plebiscite Act of 2010".

SEC. 2. PLEBISCITE.

Puerto Rico has and has had the authority to conduct a plebiscite of its residents on its future political status and to transmit the result to Congress.

Amend the long title so as to read: "A bill to clarify Puerto Rico plebiscite authority."

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 1305, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the debate here has centered largely on the procedure by

which citizens of Puerto Rico should, if they desire, become a State. I am of the opinion and what this amendment does is to state very specifically that the citizens of Puerto Rico have within their power to make that determination. I think that is the proper way to go.

But I also believe that the amendment that just passed by a voice vote, the Velázquez amendment, accomplishes the same thing. So I don't want to be redundant, and in a moment, Mr. Chairman, I am going to ask if I can have this amendment withdrawn.

But before I do that, I yield 1 minute to my colleague from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ).

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

I just want to make a couple of comments before we end this debate, as we will very, very soon.

I know that everybody thinks this is about self-determination. If it were truly about self-determination, why are the other two parties in Puerto Rico opposed to the bill? Why is it that all those who believe in independence are opposed to the bill? Why are those that believe in commonwealth opposed to the bill? If there is such consensus, if the gentleman truly represents the will of the people of Puerto Rico, why are the other two parties opposed to the bill? And that's a very important question that we ask ourselves.

Secondly, Mr. PIERLUISI acknowledged, just so that we have it all, in the Puerto Rican media, that he didn't seek the opinions of the opposition party with regards to this bill because it would have been, according to him, una perdida de tiempo. That means "a waste of time."

Now, all I want to say is it isn't a waste of time. It is valuable. And that's why I am so happy that you are doing what you're doing because I think we can all gather around the gentlewoman VELÁZQUEZ and support her amendment.

Buscar consenso no es una perdida de tiempo. To seek consensus is not a waste of time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from West Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RAHALL. First, Mr. Chairman, just a correction. The gentleman from Washington stated that the previous amendment passed by voice vote. We have a rollcall order on that; so I just wanted to correct that.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RAHALL. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I understand that. The chairman said that the amendment passed.

Mr. RAHALL. We do have a rollcall vote scheduled on that.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. But there will be a rollcall vote.

Mr. RAHALL. Reclaiming my time, this particular amendment does nothing to fulfill our obligation to provide

a process for self-determination for the people of Puerto Rico, and it is very similar to previous amendments that have been offered today. It was my hope that when the gentleman supported reporting the bill from committee, when he voted for it back on July 22, 2009, when the bill passed out of our Natural Resources Committee on a 30-8, I see the ranking member, my good friend, the gentleman from Washington is listed as “aye” vote. It’s an “aye” vote for the pending legislation before us today.

In addition, in looking through the report here, I see no dissenting views. There are additional views, but there are no dissenting views to this bill as it came out of our Committee on Natural Resources back on July 22 of last year.

So we are where we are. Regrettably, the gentleman’s substitute does nothing to advance the goal of self-determination for the people of Puerto Rico. It states the obvious. Puerto Rico does have the authority to conduct a plebiscite on its own. It has done so on several occasions, often with confusing definitions of the alternatives. But there has never been, never been, a congressionally authorized plebiscite, one backed by the full power of the United States Congress. And that is what the underlying bill is all about. That is what our efforts are here about, showing some congressionally sanctioned approval of the Puerto Ricans’ efforts at self-determination.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In response to my good friend from West Virginia, the distinguished chairman of the committee, yes, it’s true, I voted for the bill, but there is always more to the rest of the story.

In my opening remarks, I expressed doubt that this is the proper way to go. I expressed those doubts, but I know that this issue is something that needs to be resolved. I was hoping when it got to the floor of the House it might have an open rule so it could be perfected, but I wanted to find out more about this issue, and I found out more about these issues and why now I believe I should be in opposition to it. I called Governor Fortuno last Friday and told him of my decision on that, and he was very gracious when we had that conversation.

Now, as to this amendment, as I had mentioned, I think the Velázquez amendment accomplishes what I would want to accomplish in my amendment. So, Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Velázquez amendment when we have the rollcall.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to have my amendment withdrawn.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the amendment is withdrawn.

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now re-

sume on those amendments printed in House Report 111-468 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Ms. FOXX of North Carolina.

Amendment No. 2 by Mr. GUTIERREZ of Illinois.

Amendment No. 3 by Mr. GUTIERREZ of Illinois.

Amendment No. 4 by Mr. BURTON of Indiana.

Amendment No. 5 by Ms. VELÁZQUEZ of New York.

Amendment No. 6 by Ms. VELÁZQUEZ of New York.

Amendment No. 7 by Ms. VELÁZQUEZ of New York.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MS. FOXX

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 223, noes 179, not voting 34, as follows:

[Roll No. 234]

AYES—223

Aderholt	Conaway	Heller
Adler (NJ)	Cooper	Hensarling
Akin	Costello	Herger
Alexander	Courtney	Herseth Sandlin
Altmire	Cuellar	Himes
Austria	Culberson	Holden
Bachmann	Cummings	Honda
Bachus	Davis (IL)	Hunter
Bartlett	Davis (KY)	Inglis
Barton (TX)	DeLauro	Issa
Bean	Dent	Jackson (IL)
Becerra	Dreier	Jenkins
Biggert	Duncan	Johnson, Sam
Bilbray	Ellison	Jones
Bilirakis	Ellsworth	Jordan (OH)
Bishop (GA)	Emerson	Kanjorski
Bishop (UT)	Fattah	Kaptur
Blackburn	Flake	Kilpatrick (MI)
Blunt	Fleming	King (IA)
Boehner	Forbes	Kingston
Bonner	Fortenberry	Kirk
Bono Mack	Foster	Kucinich
Boozman	Fox	Lamborn
Boren	Frank (MA)	Lance
Boustany	Franks (AZ)	Latham
Brady (TX)	Frelinghuysen	LaTourette
Bright	Gallely	Latta
Broun (GA)	Garrett (NJ)	Lee (NY)
Buchanan	Gerlach	Lewis (CA)
Burgess	Giffords	Lipinski
Buyer	Gingrey (GA)	LoBiondo
Calvert	Gohmert	Lowey
Camp	Goodlatte	Lucas
Capito	Graves	Luetkemeyer
Capuano	Green, Al	Lummis
Carney	Griffith	Mack
Carter	Guthrie	Manzullo
Cassidy	Gutierrez	Marchant
Chaffetz	Hall (NY)	Marshall
Christensen	Hall (TX)	McCarthy (CA)
Cleaver	Halvorson	McCarthy (NY)
Coble	Harman	McCauley
Coffman (CO)	Harper	McClintock
Cole	Hastings (WA)	McCollum

McCotter	Platts	Simpson
McHenry	Poe (TX)	Smith (NE)
McIntyre	Posey	Smith (NJ)
McKeon	Price (GA)	Smith (TX)
McMahon	Quigley	Souder
McMorris	Radanovich	Space
Rodgers	Rangel	Spratt
Mica	Rehberg	Stearns
Michaud	Richardson	Sullivan
Miller (FL)	Roe (TN)	Terry
Miller (MI)	Rogers (AL)	Thompson (PA)
Miller, Gary	Rogers (KY)	Thornberry
Minnick	Rogers (MI)	Tiahrt
Mitchell	Rohrabacher	Tiberi
Moore (WI)	Rooney	Tonko
Moran (KS)	Roskam	Towns
Murphy (NY)	Ross	Turner
Murphy, Tim	Roybal-Allard	Upton
Myrick	Royce	Velázquez
Nadler (NY)	Rush	Walden
Neugebauer	Ryan (WI)	Watt
Oberstar	Sarbanes	Weiner
Obey	Scalise	Westmoreland
Olson	Schakowsky	Whitfield
Paulsen	Schmidt	Wilson (SC)
Payne	Sensenbrenner	Wittman
Pence	Sessions	Wolf
Perriello	Shadegg	Woolsey
Peters	Sherman	Wu
Petri	Shimkus	Young (FL)
Pitts	Shuster	

NOES—179

Ackerman	Garamendi	Norton
Andrews	Gonzalez	Nye
Arcuri	Gordon (TN)	Olver
Baca	Grayson	Ortiz
Baird	Grijalva	Owens
Baldwin	Hare	Pallone
Barrow	Hastings (FL)	Pascarell
Berkley	Heinrich	Pastor (AZ)
Berman	Higgins	Perlmutter
Berry	Hill	Peterson
Bishop (NY)	Hirono	Pierluisi
Blumenauer	Holt	Polis (CO)
Bocciari	Hoyer	Pomeroy
Bordallo	Inslee	Price (NC)
Boswell	Israel	Putnam
Boyd	Jackson Lee	Rahall
Brady (PA)	(TX)	Reichert
Braley (IA)	Johnson (GA)	Rodriguez
Brown, Corrine	Johnson (IL)	Ros-Lehtinen
Brown-Waite,	Johnson, E. B.	Rothman (NJ)
Ginny	Kagen	Ruppersberger
Burton (IN)	Kennedy	Ryan (OH)
Campbell	Kildee	Sablan
Cantor	Kilroy	Salazar
Cao	Kind	Sánchez, Linda
Capps	King (NY)	T.
Cardoza	Kirkpatrick (AZ)	Sanchez, Loretta
Carnahan	Kissell	Schauer
Carson (IN)	Klein (FL)	Schiff
Castle	Kline (MN)	Schock
Chandler	Kosmas	Schrader
Childers	Kratovil	Schwartz
Chu	Langevin	Scott (GA)
Clarke	Larsen (WA)	Scott (VA)
Clyburn	Larson (CT)	Serrano
Connolly (VA)	Lee (CA)	Sestak
Conyers	Levin	Shea-Porter
Costa	Lewis (GA)	Sires
Crenshaw	Loebach	Skelton
Crowley	Lofgren, Zoe	Slaughter
Dahlkemper	Lujan	Smith (WA)
Davis (CA)	Lungren, Daniel	Snyder
Davis (TN)	E.	Stark
DeFazio	Lynch	Stupak
Deutch	Maffei	Sutton
Diaz-Balart, L.	Maloney	Tanner
Diaz-Balart, M.	Markey (CO)	Taylor
Dicks	Markey (MA)	Thompson (CA)
Dingell	Matheson	Thompson (MS)
Doggett	Matsui	Titus
Donnelly (IN)	McDermott	Tsongas
Doyle	McGovern	Van Hollen
Driehaus	McNerney	Visclosky
Edwards (MD)	Meek (FL)	Walz
Edwards (TX)	Miller (NC)	Wasserman
Ehlers	Miller, George	Schultz
Engel	Moore (KS)	Watson
Eshoo	Moran (VA)	Welch
Etheridge	Murphy (CT)	Yarmuth
Farr	Murphy, Patrick	Young (AK)
Filner	Napolitano	
Fudge	Neal (MA)	

NOT VOTING—34

Barrett (SC)	Brown (SC)	Castor (FL)
Boucher	Butterfield	Clay

Cohen	Hodes	Shuler
Davis (AL)	Hoekstra	Speier
DeGette	Linder	Teague
Delahunt	Meeks (NY)	Tierney
Faleomavaega	Melancon	Wamp
Fallin	Mollohan	Waters
Granger	Nunes	Waxman
Green, Gene	Paul	Wilson (OH)
Hinchey	Pingree (ME)	
Hinojosa	Reyes	

□ 1729

Ms. SUTTON and Messrs. HARE, HILL, SNYDER, KLEIN of Florida, SKELTON, CONYERS, GEORGE MILLER of California, and COSTA changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. HARMAN, Mrs. HALVORSON, and Messrs. GRIFFITH, BOOZMAN, SULLIVAN, WATT, JACKSON of Illinois, BURGESS, OLSON, AL GREEN of Texas, ELLISON, COURTNEY, and CAPUANO changed their vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. GUTIERREZ

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The CHAIR. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 164, noes 236, not voting 36, as follows:

[Roll No. 235]

AYES—164

Aderholt	Flake	Kirk
Akin	Fleming	Kucinich
Alexander	Fortenberry	Lamborn
Austria	Fox	Lance
Bachmann	Frank (MA)	Latham
Bachus	Franks (AZ)	Latta
Bartlett	Frelinghuysen	Lee (CA)
Becerra	Gallely	Lee (NY)
Bilbray	Garrett (NJ)	Lewis (CA)
Blackburn	Giffords	LoBiondo
Blunt	Gingrey (GA)	Lucas
Bonner	Gohmert	Luetkemeyer
Bono Mack	Graves	Lynch
Boozman	Griffith	Manzullo
Boustany	Grijalva	Marchant
Broun (GA)	Guthrie	Marshall
Buchanan	Gutierrez	McCarthy (NY)
Calvert	Hall (NY)	McCauley
Camp	Hall (TX)	McClintock
Capito	Hastings (WA)	McCollum
Carney	Heller	McCotter
Carter	Hensarling	McIntyre
Cassidy	Herger	McKeon
Chaffetz	Herseeth Sandlin	McMahon
Christensen	Holden	McMorris
Coble	Honda	Rodgers
Coffman (CO)	Hunter	Miller (FL)
Conaway	Inglis	Miller (MI)
Costello	Jenkins	Miller, Gary
Culberson	Johnson (IL)	Minnick
Davis (IL)	Jones	Mitchell
Davis (KY)	Jordan (OH)	Moore (WI)
Dreier	Kanjorski	Moran (KS)
Duncan	Kaptur	Murphy (NY)
Edwards (MD)	Kilpatrick (MI)	Neal (MA)
Ellison	King (IA)	Neugebauer
Ellsworth	Kingston	Paulsen

Perriello	Roskam
Petri	Roybal-Allard
Pitts	Royce
Platts	Ryan (WI)
Poe (TX)	Scalise
Posey	Schakowsky
Price (GA)	Schmidt
Quigley	Scott (GA)
Radanovich	Sensenbrenner
Rangel	Sessions
Rehberg	Shadegg
Richardson	Shimkus
Roe (TN)	Shuster
Rogers (AL)	Simpson
Rogers (KY)	Smith (NE)
Rogers (MI)	Smith (NJ)
Rohrabacher	Smith (TX)
Rooney	Souder

NOES—236

Ackerman	Etheridge
Adler (NJ)	Farr
Altmire	Fattah
Andrews	Forbes
Arcuri	Foster
Baca	Fudge
Baird	Garamendi
Baldwin	Gerlach
Barrow	Gonzalez
Barton (TX)	Goodlatte
Bean	Gordon (TN)
Berkley	Grayson
Berman	Green, Al
Berry	Halvorson
Biggart	Hare
Bilirakis	Harman
Bishop (GA)	Harper
Bishop (NY)	Hastings (FL)
Bishop (UT)	Heinrich
Blumenauer	Higgins
Boccieri	Hill
Boehner	Himes
Bordallo	Hirono
Boren	Holt
Boswell	Hoyer
Boyd	Inslee
Brady (PA)	Israel
Brady (TX)	Issa
Braley (IA)	Jackson (IL)
Bright	Jackson Lee
Brown, Corrine	(TX)
Brown-Waite,	Johnson (GA)
Ginny	Johnson, E. B.
Burgess	Johnson, Sam
Burton (IN)	Kagen
Buyer	Kennedy
Campbell	Kildee
Cao	Kilroy
Capps	Kind
Capuano	King (NY)
Cardoza	Kirkpatrick (AZ)
Carnahan	Kissell
Carson (IN)	Klein (FL)
Castle	Kline (MN)
Chandler	Kosmas
Childers	Kratovil
Chu	Langevin
Clarke	Larsen (WA)
Clyburn	Larson (CT)
Cole	LaTourette
Connolly (VA)	Levin
Conyers	Lewis (GA)
Cooper	Lipinski
Costa	Loeb sack
Courtney	Lofgren, Zoe
Crenshaw	Lowe
Crowley	Lujan
Cuellar	Lummis
Cummings	Lungren, Daniel
Dahlkemper	E.
Davis (CA)	Mack
Davis (TN)	Maffei
DeFazio	Maloney
DeLauro	Markey (CO)
Dent	Markey (MA)
Deutch	Matheson
Diaz-Balart, L.	Matsui
Diaz-Balart, M.	McCarthy (CA)
Dicks	McDermott
Dingell	McGovern
Doggett	McHenry
Donnelly (IN)	McNerney
Doyle	Meek (FL)
Driehaus	Mica
Edwards (TX)	Mic haud
Ehlers	Miller (NC)
Emerson	Miller, George
Engel	Moore (KS)
Eshoo	Moran (VA)

Space	Watson
Stearns	Welch
Sullivan	
Terry	
Thompson (PA)	Barrett (SC)
Thornberry	Boucher
Tonko	Brown (SC)
Towns	Butterfield
Upton	Cantor
Velazquez	Castor (FL)
Watt	Clay
Weiner	Cleaver
Westmoreland	Cohen
Whitfield	Davis (AL)
Wilson (SC)	DeGette
Wolf	Delahunt
Woolsey	
Young (FL)	

Murphy (CT)	Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim	Myrick
Nadler (NY)	Napolitano
Norton	Nye
Oberstar	Obey
Olson	Oliver
Ortiz	Owens
Pallone	Pascarell
Pastor (AZ)	Payne
Pence	Perrin
Perlmutter	Peters
Peters	Pierluisi
Polis (CO)	Pomeroy
Price (NC)	Putnam
Rahall	Reichert
Rodriguez	Ros-Lehtinen
Ross	Rothman (NJ)
Ruppersberger	Rush
Ryan (OH)	Sablan
Salazar	Sanchez, Linda
T.	Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes	Schauer
Schiff	Schock
Schrader	Schwartz
Scott (VA)	Serrano
Sestak	Shea-Porter
Sherman	Sires
Skelton	Slaughter
Smith (WA)	Snyder
Spratt	Stark
Stupak	Sutton
Tanner	Taylor
Thompson (CA)	Thompson (MS)
Tiahrt	Tiberi
Tierney	Titus
Tongas	Turner
Van Hollen	Visclosky
Walden	Walz
Wasserman	Schultz

Wittman	Wu	Yarmuth
Young (AK)		

NOT VOTING—36

Faleomavaega	Mollohan
Fallin	Nunes
Filner	Paul
Granger	Pingree (ME)
Green, Gene	Reyes
Hinchey	Shuler
Hinojosa	Speier
Hodes	Teague
Hoekstra	Wamp
Linder	Waters
Meeks (NY)	Waxman
Melancon	Wilson (OH)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR (during the vote). Members have 2 minutes remaining to vote.

□ 1738

Ms. DELAURO changed her vote from “aye” to “no.”

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois and Mrs. BLACKBURN changed their vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 235, I was away from the Capitol due to commitments in my Congressional District. Had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. GUTIERREZ

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The CHAIR. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 13, noes 386, not voting 37, as follows:

[Roll No. 236]

AYES—13

Chaffetz	Jackson Lee	Napolitano
Edwards (MD)	(TX)	Quigley
Grijalva	Kucinich	Towns
Gutierrez	Lee (CA)	Velazquez
Honda	Moore (WI)	

NOES—386

Ackerman	Bilbray	Brown, Corrine
Aderholt	Bilirakis	Brown-Waite,
Adler (NJ)	Bishop (GA)	Ginny
Akin	Bishop (NY)	Buchanan
Alexander	Bishop (UT)	Burgess
Altmire	Blackburn	Burton (IN)
Andrews	Blumenauer	Buyer
Arcuri	Blunt	Calvert
Austria	Boccieri	Camp
Baca	Boehner	Campbell
Bachmann	Bonner	Cantor
Bachus	Bono Mack	Cao
Baird	Boozman	Capito
Baldwin	Bordallo	Capps
Barrow	Boren	Capuano
Bartlett	Boswell	Cardoza
Bartons (TX)	Boustany	Carnahan
Bean	Boyd	Carney
Becerra	Brady (PA)	Carson (IN)
Berkley	Brady (TX)	Carter
Berman	Braley (IA)	Cassidy
Berry	Bright	Castle
Biggart	Broun (GA)	Chandler

Childers	Jackson (IL)	Olson	Titus	Wasserman	Wittman	Doggett	LoBiondo	Rogers (KY)
Christensen	Jenkins	Oliver	Tonko	Schultz	Wolf	Donnelly (IN)	Loeb sack	Rogers (MI)
Chu	Johnson (GA)	Ortiz	Tsongas	Watson	Doyle	Loftgren, Zoe	Rohrabacher	Rohrabacher
Clarke	Johnson (IL)	Owens	Turner	Watt	Dreier	Lowey	Rooney	Rooney
Cleaver	Johnson, E. B.	Pallone	Upton	Weiner	Driehaus	Lujan	Ros-Lehtinen	Ros-Lehtinen
Clyburn	Johnson, Sam	Pascarell	Van Hollen	Welch	Duncan	Lungren, Daniel	Roskam	Roskam
Coble	Jones	Pastor (AZ)	Visclosky	Westmoreland	Edwards (TX)	E.	Ross	Ross
Coffman (CO)	Jordan (OH)	Paulsen	Walden	Whitfield	Ehlers	Lynch	Rothman (NJ)	Rothman (NJ)
Cole	Kagen	Payne	Walz	Wilson (SC)	Ellsworth	Mack	Roybal-Allard	Roybal-Allard
Conaway	Kanjorski	Pence			Emerson	Maffei	Ruppersberger	Ruppersberger
Connolly (VA)	Kaptur	Perlmutter			Engel	Maloney	Ryan (OH)	Ryan (OH)
Conyers	Kennedy	Perriello	Barrett (SC)	Gohmert	Eshoo	Manzullo	Ryan (WI)	Ryan (WI)
Cooper	Kildee	Peters	Boucher	Granger	Etheridge	Markey (CO)	Sablan	Sablan
Costa	Kilpatrick (MI)	Peterson	Brown (SC)	Green, Gene	Farr	Marshall	Sánchez, Linda	Sánchez, Linda
Costello	Kilroy	Petri	Butterfield	Hinchey	Flake	Matheson	T.	T.
Courtney	Kind	Pierluisi	Castor (FL)	Hinojosa	Foster	Matsui	Sanchez, Loretta	Sanchez, Loretta
Crenshaw	King (IA)	Pitts	Clay	Hodes	Frelinghuysen	McCarthy (CA)	Sarbanes	Sarbanes
Crowley	King (NY)	Platts	Cohen	Hoekstra	Fudge	McCarthy (NY)	Scalise	Scalise
Cuellar	Kingston	Poe (TX)	Davis (AL)	Lewis (GA)	Gallegly	McCauley	Schauer	Schauer
Culberson	Kirk	Polis (CO)	DeGette	Linder	Garamendi	McClintock	Schock	Schock
Cummings	Kirkpatrick (AZ)	Pomeroy	Delahunt	Meeke (NY)	Garrett (NJ)	McCollum	Schradler	Schradler
Dahlkemper	Kissell	Posey	Faleomavaega	Melancon	Gerlach	McCotter	Schwartz	Schwartz
Davis (CA)	Klein (FL)	Price (GA)	Fallin	Mollohan	Giffords	McGovern	Scott (GA)	Scott (GA)
Davis (IL)	Kline (MN)	Price (NC)	Filner	Nunes	Gonzalez	McIntyre	Sensenbrenner	Sensenbrenner
Davis (KY)	Kosmas	Putnam			Goodlatte	McMahon	Serrano	Serrano
Davis (TN)	Kratovil	Radanovich			Griffith	McNerney	Sessions	Sessions
DeFazio	Lamborn	Rahall			Guthrie	Meek (FL)	Sestak	Sestak
DeLauro	Lance	Rangel			Hall (NY)	Mica	Shadegg	Shadegg
Dent	Langevin	Rehberg			Hall (TX)	Miller (MI)	Shea-Porter	Shea-Porter
Deutch	Larsen (WA)	Reichert			Halvorson	Miller (NC)	Sherman	Sherman
Diaz-Balart, L.	Larson (CT)	Richardson			Hare	Miller, George	Shimkus	Shimkus
Diaz-Balart, M.	Latham	Rodriguez			Harman	Minnick	Shuster	Shuster
Dicks	LaTourette	Roe (TN)			Hastings (FL)	Mitchell	Simpson	Simpson
Dingell	Latta	Rogers (AL)			Heinrich	Moore (KS)	Sires	Sires
Doggett	Lee (NY)	Rogers (KY)			Hensarling	Moran (VA)	Smith (NE)	Smith (NE)
Donnelly (IN)	Levin	Rogers (MI)			Herger	Murphy (CT)	Smith (NJ)	Smith (NJ)
Doyle	Lewis (CA)	Rohrabacher			Herseth Sandlin	Murphy (NY)	Smith (TX)	Smith (TX)
Dreier	Lipinski	Ros-Lehtinen			Higgins	Murphy, Patrick	Smith (WA)	Smith (WA)
Driehaus	LoBiondo	Roskam			Hill	Murphy, Tim	Snyder	Snyder
Duncan	Loeb sack	Ross			Himes	Nadler (NY)	Space	Space
Edwards (TX)	Loftgren, Zoe	Rothman (NJ)			Holden	Neal (MA)	Spratt	Spratt
Ehlers	Lowey	Roybal-Allard			Holt	Neugebauer	Stark	Stark
Ellison	Lucas	Royce			Hoyer	Norton	Stearns	Stearns
Ellsworth	Luetkemeyer	Ruppersberger			Inslee	Nye	Stupak	Stupak
Emerson	Lujan	Rush			Israel	Obey	Sutton	Sutton
Engel	Lummis	Ryan (OH)			Issa	Olson	Tanner	Tanner
Eshoo	Lungren, Daniel	Ryan (WI)			Johnson (GA)	Olver	Taylor	Taylor
Etheridge	E.	Sablan			Johnson (IL)	Ortiz	Thompson (CA)	Thompson (CA)
Farr	Lynch	Salazar			Johnson, E. B.	Owens	Thompson (MS)	Thompson (MS)
Fattah	Mack	Sánchez, Linda			Johnson, Sam	Pallone	Thompson (PA)	Thompson (PA)
Flake	Maffei	T.			Jones	Pascarell	Thornberry	Thornberry
Fleming	Maloney	Sanchez, Loretta			Kagen	Pastor (AZ)	Tiberi	Tiberi
Forbes	Manzullo	Sarbanes			Kanjorski	Paulsen	Tierney	Tierney
Fortenberry	Marchant	Scalise			Kaptur	Payne	Titus	Titus
Foster	Markey (CO)	Schakowsky			Kennedy	Pence	Tonko	Tonko
Fox	Markey (MA)	Schauer			Kildee	Perlmutter	Tsongas	Tsongas
Frank (MA)	Marshall	Schiff			Kilpatrick (MI)	Perriello	Turner	Turner
Franks (AZ)	Matheson	Schmidt			Kilroy	Peters	Upton	Upton
Frelinghuysen	Matsui	Schock			Kind	Peterson	Van Hollen	Van Hollen
Fudge	McCarthy (CA)	Schradler			King (NY)	Petri	Visclosky	Visclosky
Gallegly	McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz			Kirkpatrick (AZ)	Pierluisi	Walden	Walden
Garamendi	McCauley	Scott (GA)			Kissell	Platts	Walz	Walz
Garrett (NJ)	McClintock	Scott (VA)			Klein (FL)	Poe (TX)	Wasserman	Wasserman
Gerlach	McCollum	Sensenbrenner			Kline (MN)	Polis (CO)	Schultz	Schultz
Giffords	McCotter	Serrano			Kosmas	Pomeroy	Watson	Watson
Gingrey (GA)	McDermott	Sessions			Kratovil	Posey	Welch	Welch
Gonzalez	McGovern	Sestak			Lance	Price (NC)	Whitfield	Whitfield
Goodlatte	McHenry	Shadegg			Langevin	Putnam	Wilson (SC)	Wilson (SC)
Gordon (TN)	McIntyre	Shea-Porter			Larsen (WA)	Radanovich	Wolf	Wolf
Graves	McKeon	Sherman			Latham	Rehberg	Wu	Wu
Grayson	McMahon	Shimkus			LaTourette	Reichert	Yarmuth	Yarmuth
Green, Al	McMorris	Shuster			Levin	Richardson	Young (AK)	Young (AK)
Griffith	Rodgers	Simpson			Lewis (CA)	Rodriguez	Young (FL)	Young (FL)
Guthrie	McNerney	Sires			Lipinski	Roe (TN)		
Hall (NY)	Meek (FL)	Skelton						
Hall (TX)	Mica	Slaughter						
Halvorson	Michaud	Smith (NE)						
Hare	Miller (FL)	Smith (NJ)						
Harman	Miller (MI)	Smith (TX)						
Harper	Miller (NC)	Smith (WA)						
Hastings (FL)	Miller, Gary	Snyder						
Hastings (WA)	Miller, George	Souder						
Heinrich	Minnick	Space						
Heller	Mitchell	Spratt						
Hensarling	Moore (KS)	Stark						
Herger	Moran (KS)	Stearns						
Herseth Sandlin	Moran (VA)	Stupak						
Higgins	Murphy (CT)	Sullivan						
Hill	Murphy (NY)	Sutton						
Himes	Murphy, Patrick	Tanner						
Hirono	Murphy, Tim	Taylor						
Holden	Myrick	Terry						
Holt	Nadler (NY)	Thompson (CA)						
Hoyer	Neal (MA)	Thompson (MS)						
Hunter	Neugebauer	Thompson (PA)						
Inglis	Norton	Thornberry						
Inslee	Nye	Tiahrt						
Israel	Oberstar	Tiberi						
Issa	Obey	Tierney						

NOT VOTING—37

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR (during the vote). Members have 2 minutes remaining to vote.

□ 1744

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 236, I was away from the Capitol due to commitments in my Congressional District. Had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. BURTON OF INDIANA

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The CHAIR. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 301, noes 100, not voting 35, as follows:

[Roll No. 237]

AYES—301

Ackerman	Bordallo	Chaffetz
Aderholt	Boren	Chandler
Adler (NJ)	Boswell	Childers
Alexander	Boustany	Cleaver
Altmire	Boyd	Clyburn
Arcuri	Brady (PA)	Coble
Austria	Brady (TX)	Cole
Baca	Braley (IA)	Conaway
Baird	Bright	Connolly (VA)
Baldwin	Brown-Waite,	Cooper
Barrow	Ginny	Costa
Bartlett	Buchanan	Costello
Barton (TX)	Burgess	Crenshaw
Bean	Burton (IN)	Crowley
Becerra	Buyer	Cuellar
Berkley	Calvert	Culberson
Berman	Camp	Dahlkemper
Berry	Campbell	Davis (CA)
Biggert	Cao	Davis (KY)
Bilirakis	Capito	Davis (TN)
Bishop (GA)	Capps	DeFazio
Bishop (NY)	Cardoza	Dent
Bishop (UT)	Cardahan	Deutch
Blackburn	Carney	Diaz-Balart, L.
Blumenauer	Carter	Diaz-Balart, M.
Boccheri	Cassidy	Dicks
Bono Mack	Castle	Dingell

NOES—100

Akin	DeLauro	Hunter
Andrews	Edwards (MD)	Inglis
Bachmann	Ellison	Jackson (IL)
Bachus	Fattah	Jackson Lee
Bilbray	Fleming	(TX)
Blunt	Forbes	Jenkins
Boehner	Fortenberry	Jordan (OH)
Bonner	Fox	King (IA)
Boozman	Frank (MA)	Kingston
Brown (GA)	Franks (AZ)	Kirk
Brown, Corrine	Gingrey (GA)	Kucinich
Cantor	Gordon (TN)	Lamborn
Capuano	Graves	Larson (CT)
Carson (IN)	Grayson	Latta
Christensen	Green, Al	Lee (CA)
Chu	Grijalva	Lee (NY)
Clarke	Gutierrez	Lucas
Coffman (CO)	Harper	Luetkemeyer
Conyers	Hastings (WA)	Lummis
Courtney	Heller	Marchant
Cummings	Hirono	Mar

McHenry	Pitts	Slaughter
McKeon	Price (GA)	Souder
McMorris	Quigley	Sullivan
Rodgers	Rangel	Terry
Michaud	Rogers (AL)	Tiahrt
Miller (FL)	Royce	Towns
Miller, Gary	Rush	Velázquez
Moore (WI)	Salazar	Watt
Moran (KS)	Schakowsky	Weiner
Myrick	Schmidt	Westmoreland
Napolitano	Scott (VA)	Wittman
Oberstar	Skelton	Woolsey

NOT VOTING—35

Barrett (SC)	Filner	Nunes
Boucher	Gohmert	Paul
Brown (SC)	Granger	Pingree (ME)
Butterfield	Green, Gene	Reyes
Castor (FL)	Hinchee	Shuler
Clay	Hinojosa	Speier
Cohen	Hodes	Teague
Davis (AL)	Hoekstra	Wamp
DeGette	Linder	Waters
Delahunt	Meeks (NY)	Waxman
Faleomavaega	Melancon	Wilson (OH)
Fallin	Mollohan	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR (during the vote). Members have 2 minutes remaining to vote.

□ 1751

Mr. SMITH of Texas changed his vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 237, I was away from the Capitol due to commitments in my Congressional District. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MS. VELÁZQUEZ

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The CHAIR. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 11, noes 387, not voting 38, as follows:

[Roll No. 238]

AYES—11

Gutierrez	Kaptur	Moore (WI)
Honda	Kilpatrick (MI)	Towns
Jackson Lee	Kucinich	Velázquez
(TX)	Lee (CA)	Weiner

NOES—387

Ackerman	Berkley	Boren
Aderholt	Berman	Boswell
Adler (NJ)	Berry	Boustany
Alexander	Biggart	Boyd
Altmire	Bilbray	Brady (PA)
Andrews	Bilirakis	Brady (TX)
Arcuri	Bishop (GA)	Braley (IA)
Austria	Bishop (NY)	Bright
Baca	Bishop (UT)	Broun (GA)
Bachmann	Blackburn	Brown, Corrine
Bachus	Blumenauer	Brown-Waite,
Baird	Blunt	Ginny
Baldwin	Boccheri	Buchanan
Barrow	Boehner	Burgess
Bartlett	Bonner	Burton (IN)
Barton (TX)	Bono Mack	Buyer
Bean	Boozman	Calvert
Becerra	Bordallo	Camp

Campbell	Heller	Moore (KS)
Cantor	Hensarling	Moran (KS)
Cao	Herger	Moran (VA)
Capito	Herseth Sandlin	Murphy (CT)
Capps	Higgins	Murphy (NY)
Capuano	Hill	Murphy, Patrick
Cardoza	Himes	Murphy, Tim
Carney	Hirono	Myrick
Carson (IN)	Holden	Nadler (NY)
Carter	Holt	Napolitano
Cassidy	Hoyer	Neal (MA)
Castle	Hunter	Neugebauer
Chaffetz	Inglis	Norton
Chandler	Inslee	Nye
Childers	Israel	Oberstar
Christensen	Issa	Obey
Chu	Jackson (IL)	Olson
Clarke	Jenkins	Olver
Cleaver	Johnson (GA)	Ortiz
Clyburn	Johnson (IL)	Owens
Coble	Johnson, E. B.	Pallone
Coffman (CO)	Johnson, Sam	Pascarell
Cole	Jones	Pastor (AZ)
Conaway	Jordan (OH)	Paulsen
Connolly (VA)	Kagen	Payne
Conyers	Kanjorski	Pence
Cooper	Kennedy	Perlmutter
Costa	Kildee	Perriello
Costello	Kilroy	Peters
Courtney	Kind	Peterson
Crenshaw	King (IA)	Petri
Crowley	King (NY)	Pierluisi
Cuellar	Kingston	Pitts
Culberson	Kirk	Platts
Cummings	Kirkpatrick (AZ)	Poe (TX)
Dahlkemper	Kissell	Polis (CO)
Davis (CA)	Klein (FL)	Pomeroy
Davis (IL)	Kline (MN)	Posey
Davis (KY)	Kosmas	Price (GA)
Davis (TN)	Kratovil	Price (NC)
DeFazio	Lamborn	Putnam
DeLauro	Lance	Quigley
Dent	Langevin	Radanovich
Deutch	Larsen (WA)	Rahall
Diaz-Balart, L.	Larson (CT)	Rangel
Diaz-Balart, M.	Latham	Rehberg
Dicks	LaTourette	Reichert
Dingell	Latta	Richardson
Doggett	Lee (NY)	Rodriguez
Donnelly (IN)	Levin	Roe (TN)
Doyle	Lewis (CA)	Rogers (AL)

Michaud
Miller, Gary
Minnick
Mitchell
Moore (WI)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy (NY)
Nadler (NY)
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nye
Olson
Pence
Pitts
Platts

NOES—285

Ackerman
Aderholt
Adler (NJ)
Akin
Alexander
Andrews
Arcuri
Austria
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boccheri
Boehner
Bono Mack
Bordallo
Boswell
Boustany
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite,
Ginny
Buchanan
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Cao
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cassidy
Castle
Chaffetz
Chandler
Childers
Chu
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Costa
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Dahlkemper
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
DeFazio
Dent
Deutch
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)

Poe (TX)
Price (GA)
Richardson
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schrader
Sessions
Shadeeg
Sherman
Skelton

Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Space
Stearns
Sullivan
Thornberry
Tonko
Towns
Velázquez
Watt
Weiner
Westmoreland
Wilson (SC)

Mack
Maffei
Maloney
Manzullo
Markey (CO)
Markey (MA)
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McClintock
McCollum
McCotter
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McNerney
Meek (FL)
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore (KS)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Myrick
Napolitano
Norton
Oberstar
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascarell
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Payne
Perlmutter
Perrillo
Peters
Peterson
Petri
Pierluisi
Polis (CO)
Pomeroy
Posey
Price (NC)
Putnam
Quigley
Radanovich
Rahall
Rangel
Rehberg
Reichert
Rodriguez
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (MI)
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman (NJ)
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Sablan
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schauer
Schiff
Bonner
Schmidt
Schock
Schwartz
Scott (GA)

Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Shinkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Spratt
Stark
Stupak

Barrett (SC)
Boucher
Brown (SC)
Butterfield
Castor (FL)
Clay
Cohen
Davis (AL)
DeGette
Delahunt
Faleomavaega
Fallin
Filner

NOT VOTING—39

Gohmert
Granger
Green, Gene
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hodes
Hoekstra
Linder
McCauley
McCauley (NY)
Melancon
Mollohan
Nunes

Visclosky
Walden
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Watson
Welch
Whitfield
Wittman
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

Grijalva
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Holden
Honda
Hunter
Inglis
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kilpatrick (MI)
King (IA)
Kucinich
Lamborn
Lance
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee (NY)
Lewis (CA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lynch
Manzullo
Marchant

Marshall
Matheson
McCarthy (NY)
McCauley
McClintock
McCollum
McCotter
McHenry
McKeon
McMahon
McMorris
Rodgers
Michaud
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Minnick
Mitchell
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Myrick
Nadler (NY)
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nye
Olson
Paulsen
Perrillo
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Price (GA)
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rooney

Roskam
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Rush
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadeeg
Sherman
Shinkus
Shuster
Simpson
Skelton
Smith (TX)
Souder
Space
Stearns
Sullivan
Tanner
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tonko
Towns
Turner
Upton
Velázquez
Watt
Weiner
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf

NOES—223

Ackerman
Alexander
Andrews
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Boccheri
Bono Mack
Bordallo
Boswell
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite,
Ginny
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Cao
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson (IN)
Castle
Childers
Chu
Clarke
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cole
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Costa
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Dahlkemper
Davis (CA)
Davis (TN)
DeFazio
Dent
Deutch
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett

Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Driebeaus
Edwards (MD)
Edwards (TX)
Ehlers
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fleming
Foster
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Garamendi
Garrett (NJ)
Gonzalez
Gordon (TN)
Grayson
Green, Al
Hall (NY)
Halvorson
Hare
Harman
Harper
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hirono
Holt
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee
(TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kagen
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilroy
Kind
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kirkpatrick (AZ)
Kissell
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Kosmas
Kratovil
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Lee (CA)

Levin
Lewis (GA)
Loebach
Lofgren, Zoe
Lujan
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel
E.
Maffei
Maloney
Markey (CO)
Markey (MA)
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meek (FL)
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy (NY)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Napolitano
Norton
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascarell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pence
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pierluisi
Polis (CO)
Pomeroy
Posey
Price (NC)
Putnam
Quigley
Radanovich
Rahall
Rangel
Rehberg
Reichert
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ros-Lehtinen

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR
The CHAIR (during the vote). Mem-
bers have 2 minutes remaining to vote.

□

Ross	Scott (VA)	Thompson (MS)
Rothman (NJ)	Serrano	Tiaht
Ruppersberger	Sestak	Tierney
Ryan (OH)	Shea-Porter	Titus
Sablan	Sires	Tsongas
Salazar	Slaughter	Van Hollen
Sánchez, Linda	Smith (NE)	Visclosky
T.	Smith (NJ)	Walden
Sanchez, Loretta	Smith (WA)	Walz
Sarbanes	Snyder	Wasserman
Schakowsky	Spratt	Schultz
Schauer	Stark	Watson
Schiff	Stupak	Welch
Schock	Sutton	Woolsey
Schrader	Taylor	Wu
Schwartz	Terry	Young (AK)
Scott (GA)	Thompson (CA)	Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—42

Barrett (SC)	Delahunt	Melancon
Blackburn	Faleomavaega	Mollohan
Blumenauer	Fallin	Nunes
Boucher	Filner	Paul
Boyd	Gohmert	Pingree (ME)
Brown (SC)	Granger	Reyes
Butterfield	Green, Gene	Shuler
Castor (FL)	Hinchey	Speier
Christensen	Hinojosa	Teague
Clay	Hodes	Wamp
Cohen	Hoekstra	Waters
Culberson	Linder	Waxman
Davis (AL)	Mack	Wilson (OH)
DeGette	Meeks (NY)	Yarmuth

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR (during the vote). Members have 2 minutes remaining to vote.

□ 1811

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chair, on rollcall 240, I was away from the Capitol due to commitments in my Congressional District. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

The CHAIR. The question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WEINER) having assumed the chair, Mr. SCHIFF, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2499) to provide for a federally sanctioned self-determination process for the people of Puerto Rico, pursuant to House Resolution 1305, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the amendment.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I am. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Hastings of Washington moves to recommit the bill H.R. 2499 to the Committee on Natural Resources with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Amend Section 2(c)(3) to read as follows:

(3) Statehood: Puerto Rico should be admitted as a State of the Union, the official language of this State shall be English, and all its official business shall be conducted in English; and laws shall be in place that ensure that its residents have the Second Amendment right to own, possess, carry, use for lawful self defense, store, assembled at home, and transport for lawful purposes, firearms and in any amount ammunition, provided that such keeping and bearing of firearms and ammunition does not otherwise violate Federal law. If you agree, mark here

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the motion be considered read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, as the House considers the bill on Puerto Rico's future, this motion to recommit provides Members of the House an opportunity to register their views on questions of English as an official language and on the importance of protecting Americans' Second Amendment rights.

□ 1815

Mr. Speaker, two amendments were filed with the Rules Committee to directly address the issues of the English language and Second Amendment gun rights. Both were blocked by the Democrat-controlled Rules Committee.

What that means, of course, is that Members have no opportunity to debate this issue. Making an amendment in order does not guarantee, obviously, the outcome. Yet we are even denied the opportunity of English as the official language and Second Amendment rights. So this motion to recommit simply combines these two issues in the motion to recommit. Let me explain specifically what the motion will do.

It will amend the description of "statehood," which will appear on the plebiscite ballot authorized under this bill, to state: one, English will be the official language of the State, and all official business will be conducted in English; two, laws will be in place that will "ensure residents have the Second Amendment right to own, possess, carry, use for self-defense, store assembled at home, and transport for lawful purposes, firearms and in any amount ammunition, providing that such keeping and bearing of firearms and ammunition does not otherwise violate Federal law."

This MTR simply expresses the views on these two important issues. It has been asserted during the debate that providing for English as the official language is something unprecedented or that it is something which hasn't been talked about or whatever. That is simply not true, because four States were admitted to the Union, and part of that admittance was a requirement that English would be the official

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I rise in opposition to this motion.

I traveled throughout the Soviet Union to captive nations with many of you, and I rose in those nations and said to the leaders, You need to give your people self-determination.

Many of you have said the same thing on this floor. You've said it about tyrant governments that have kept their peoples from practicing their own religions, from speaking their own languages, from adopting their own laws. You have spoken out against it. They were foreign nations, and it was easy to do. But now we talk about Puerto Rico, a territory of the United States of America. What Mr. PIERLUISI seeks to do, what his Governor wants to do, what two-thirds of his legislature want to do—the senate and the house—is to give them the opportunity to exercise that self-determination.

Now, on this floor, we have adopted an amendment, for which many have spoken, that we ought to give four alternatives rather than three. We've done that. There will now be four alternatives for the people of Puerto Rico on the second ballot. Let us now defeat this amendment designed only to defeat this bill.

Hawaii was not made to do this. As the gentleman from Alaska, DON YOUNG, will tell you and as he said on the floor, Alaska was not made to do this, and we did not ask that to occur in any one of the captive nations to which we spoke. Ronald Reagan did not ask for that. Let us not ask for it. Let us give an honest up-or-down vote to the people of Puerto Rico, who for 112 years have perceived themselves as a colony.

Now, there are some who want statehood. There are some who want independence and sovereign status. There are some who want commonwealth. There are, perhaps, some who want a relationship with the United States somewhat like Australia has with Great Britain. As the gentleman from Puerto Rico said, do not diminish this principle, however, with the politics of the future. This will be debated when and if Puerto Rico asks for statehood.

Your Republican Governor asks for a vote for this bill and against this motion to recommit. I ask my party to do the same. Give Puerto Rico its chance today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time has expired.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage, if ordered; and the motion to suspend the rules on H. Res. 375.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 194, noes 198, not voting 38, as follows:

[Roll No. 241]

AYES—194

Aderholt	Fox	Miller, Gary
Adler (NJ)	Franks (AZ)	Minnick
Akin	Frelinghuysen	Mitchell
Alexander	Gallegly	Moran (KS)
Altmire	Garrett (NJ)	Murphy, Tim
Arcuri	Gerlach	Myrick
Austria	Giffords	Neugebauer
Bachmann	Gingrey (GA)	Nye
Bachus	Gohmert	Olson
Barrow	Goodlatte	Owens
Bartlett	Graves	Paulsen
Barton (TX)	Griffith	Pence
Biggert	Guthrie	Perriello
Bilbray	Hall (TX)	Peterson
Bilirakis	Harper	Petri
Bishop (UT)	Hastings (WA)	Pitts
Blackburn	Heller	Platts
Blunt	Hensarling	Poe (TX)
Boccheri	Herger	Posey
Boehner	Holden	Price (GA)
Bonner	Hunter	Putnam
Bono Mack	Inglis	Radanovich
Boozman	Issa	Rehberg
Boren	Jenkins	Reichert
Boustany	Johnson (IL)	Roe (TN)
Brady (TX)	Johnson, Sam	Rogers (AL)
Bright	Jones	Rogers (KY)
Broun (GA)	Jordan (OH)	Rogers (MI)
Brown-Waite,	Kanjorski	Rohrabacher
Ginny	King (IA)	Rooney
Buchanan	King (NY)	Roskam
Burgess	Kingston	Royce
Burton (IN)	Kirk	Ryan (WI)
Buyer	Kline (MN)	Scalise
Calvert	Lamborn	Schauer
Camp	Lance	Schmidt
Campbell	Latham	Sensenbrenner
Cantor	LaTourette	Sessions
Capito	Latta	Shadegg
Carney	Lee (NY)	Shimkus
Carter	Lewis (CA)	Shuster
Cassidy	Lipinski	Simpson
Castle	LoBiondo	Skelton
Chaffetz	Lucas	Smith (NE)
Childers	Luetkemeyer	Smith (NJ)
Coble	Lummis	Smith (TX)
Coffman (CO)	Lungren, Daniel	Souder
Cole	E.	Space
Conaway	Mack	Stearns
Costello	Manzullo	Sullivan
Crenshaw	Marchant	Terry
Culberson	Marshall	Thompson (PA)
Davis (KY)	McCarthy (CA)	Thornberry
Dent	McCauley	Tiahrt
Donnelly (IN)	McClintock	Tiberi
Dreier	McCotter	Titus
Driehaus	McHenry	Turner
Duncan	McIntyre	Upton
Ehlers	McKeon	Walden
Ellsworth	McMahon	Westmoreland
Emerson	McMorris	Whitfield
Flake	Rodgers	Wilson (SC)
Fleming	McNerney	Wittman
Forbes	Mica	Wolf
Fortenberry	Miller (FL)	Young (FL)
Foster	Miller (MI)	

NOES—198

Ackerman	Braley (IA)	Costa
Andrews	Brown, Corrine	Courtney
Baca	Cao	Crowley
Baird	Capps	C

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 223, nays 169, answered “present” 1, not voting 37, as follows:

[Roll No. 242]

YEAS—223

Ackerman	Gonzalez	Napolitano
Adler (NJ)	Gordon (TN)	Neal (MA)
Andrews	Grayson	Oberstar
Arcuri	Green, Al	Obey
Baca	Grijalva	Oliver
Baird	Hall (NY)	Ortiz
Baldwin	Halvorson	Owens
Barrow	Hare	Pallone
Bartlett	Harman	Pascarell
Becerra	Hastings (FL)	Pastor (AZ)
Berkley	Heinrich	Payne
Berman	Hensarling	Pence
Biggert	Herseht Sandlin	Perlmutter
Bishop (GA)	Higgins	Peters
Bishop (NY)	Hill	Peterson
Blackburn	Himes	Polis (CO)
Blumenauer	Hirono	Pomeroy
Boccheri	Holt	Posey
Boswell	Hoyer	Price (NC)
Brady (PA)	Inslee	Putnam
Braley (IA)	Israel	Rahall
Brown, Corrine	Issa	Rangel
Brown-Waite,	Jackson (IL)	Reichert
Ginny	Jackson Lee	Richardson
Buchanan	(TX)	Rodriguez
Burton (IN)	Johnson (GA)	Ros-Lehtinen
Buyer	Johnson, E. B.	Rothman (NJ)
Campbell	Kagen	Roybal-Allard
Cantor	Kaptur	Ruppersberger
Cao	Kennedy	Ryan (OH)
Capps	Kildee	Salazar
Capuano	Kilroy	Sánchez, Linda
Cardoza	Kind	T.
Carnahan	King (NY)	Sanchez, Loretta
Carson (IN)	Kirk	Sarbanes
Castle	Kirkpatrick (AZ)	Shakowsky
Chu	Kissell	Schauer
Clarke	Kline (MN)	Schiff
Cleaver	Kosmas	Schock
Clyburn	Kratovil	Schrader
Coffman (CO)	Langevin	Schwartz
Cole	Larsen (WA)	Scott (GA)
Connolly (VA)	Larson (CT)	Scott (VA)
Conyers	Lee (CA)	Serrano
Costa	Levin	Sestak
Crenshaw	Lewis (GA)	Shea-Porter
Crowley	Loeb sack	Sires
Cuellar	Lofgren, Zoe	Skelton
Cummings	Lowe y	Smith (WA)
Dahlkemper	Luján	Snyder
Davis (CA)	Lungren, Daniel	Spratt
Davis (TN)	E.	Stark
DeFazio	Lynch	Stupak
Dent	Mack	Sutton
Deutch	Maffei	Tanner
Diaz-Balart, L.	Maloney	Taylor
Diaz-Balart, M.	Markey (CO)	Thompson (CA)
Dicks	Markey (MA)	Thompson (MS)
Dingell	Matsui	Thompson (PA)
Doggett	McCarthy (CA)	Tierney
Doyle	McCarthy (NY)	Titus
Driehaus	McCollum	Tonko
Edwards (MD)	McDermott	Towns
Edwards (TX)	McGovern	Tsongas
Ehlers	McNerney	Van Hollen
Ellsworth	Meek (FL)	Visclosky
Engel	Mica	Walden
Eshoo	Michaud	Walz
Etheridge	Miller (NC)	Wasserman
Farr	Miller, George	Schultz
Fattah	Moore (KS)	Watson
Flake	Moran (VA)	Watt
Foster	Murphy (NY)	Welch
Frelinghuysen	Murphy, Patrick	Woolsey
Fudge	Murphy, Tim	Wu
Garamendi	Nadler (NY)	Young (AK)

NAYS—169

Aderholt	Bilirakis	Broun (GA)
Akin	Bishop (UT)	Burgess
Alexander	Blunt	Calvert
Altmire	Boehner	Camp
Austria	Bonner	Capito
Bachmann	Bono Mack	Carney
Bachus	Boozman	Carter
Barton (TX)	Boren	Cassidy
Bean	Boustany	Chaffetz
Berry	Brady (TX)	Chandler
Bilbray	Bright	Childers

Coble	King (IA)	Price (GA)
Conaway	Kingston	Quigley
Cooper	Kucinich	Radanovich
Costello	Lamborn	Rehberg
Courtney	Lance	Roe (TN)
Culberson	Latham	Rogers (AL)
Davis (IL)	LaTourette	Rogers (KY)
Davis (KY)	Latta	Rogers (MI)
DeLauro	Lee (NY)	Rohrabacher
Donnelly (IN)	Lewis (CA)	Rooney
Dreier	Lipinski	Roskam
Duncan	LoBiondo	Ross
Ellison	Lucas	Royce
Emerson	Luetkemeyer	Rush
Fleming	Lummis	Ryan (WI)
Forbes	Manzullo	Scalise
Fortenberry	Marchant	Schmidt
Fox	Marshall	Sensenbrenner
Frank (MA)	Matheson	Sessions
Franks (AZ)	McCaul	Shadeegg
Galleghy	McClintock	Sherman
Garrett (NJ)	McCotter	Shimkus
Gerlach	McHenry	Shuster
Giffords	McIntyre	Simpson
Gingrey (GA)	McKeon	Smith (NE)
Gohmert	McMahon	Smith (NJ)
Goodlatte	McMorris	Smith (TX)
Graves		