



REP. TOM PRICE, M.D. (R-GA), CHAIRMAN
PAUL TELLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
 424 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
 WASHINGTON, DC 20515

rsc.price.house.gov ph (202) 226-9717 / fax (202) 226-1633

Legislative Bulletin.....April 29, 2010

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Amendments to H.R. 2499—Puerto Rico Democracy Act

Order of Business: The bill is expected to be considered on Thursday, April 29, 2010 under a structured rule. The rule ([H.Res.1305](#)) provides for one hour and thirty minutes of debate equally divided and controlled by the majority and minority, waives all points of order against consideration of the bill except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI (earmarks & “pay-go”), provides for consideration of 8 amendments, and provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

RSC Staff Contact: Bruce Miller, bruce.miller@mail.house.gov, (202) 226-9720.

AMENDMENTS MADE IN ORDER UNDER THE RULE

1. **Foxx (R-NC).** The amendment creates a fourth option under the second stage plebiscite to add the choice of “commonwealth” to allow supporters of the status quo to vote their preference.
2. **Gutierrez (D-IL).** The amendment creates a fourth option under the second stage plebiscite to add the choice of “none of the above” with regard to the status of Puerto Rico.
3. **Gutierrez (D-IL).** Provides for all ballots in the plebiscite enacted under H.R. 2499 be printed in Spanish. English ballots may only be used if requested by the voter.
4. **Burton (R-IN)/Young (R-AK).** The amendment amends the third section of the bill to ensure all ballots under the plebiscite are printed in English, inform people participating in the plebiscite that if Puerto Rico retains its current political status or selects statehood, the official government language requirements shall apply to Puerto Rico in the same manner as the rest of the U.S. The amendment also requires voters to be informed it is the sense of Congress that it is in the best interest of the United States that teaching English should be promoted in Puerto Rico in order to allow students to achieve English proficiency.
5. **Velázquez (D-NY)/Gutierrez (D-IL).** Amends the bill to not only allow all individuals born in Puerto Rico to participate in the plebiscite, but also includes individuals that have at least one parent born in Puerto Rico.

6. **Velázquez (D-NY)**. The amendment eliminates the first round plebiscite and replaces it with the authority for Puerto Rico to conduct the second round plebiscite, and adds a fourth option to select “Commonwealth”. The amendment also requires a run-off election if none of the four options receives at least 50% of the votes. The run-off will consist of the two options that received the highest vote and a third option - “none of the above.”
7. **Velázquez (D-NY)**. Adds a series of findings to the bill regarding Congress respecting the right the right of self-determination by the people of Puerto Rico and Congress should postpone consideration of the Puerto Rico’s status until presented an official proposal from the people of Puerto Rico. It also adds a sense of Congress that Puerto Rico should conduct their own plebiscite with two options
 - ◆ Puerto Rico should conduct a plebiscite to determine the future proposal for the political status of Puerto Rico.
 - ◆ Puerto Rico should **NOT** conduct a plebiscite to determine the future proposal for the political status of Puerto Rico.
8. **Hastings (R-WA)**. Strikes the entire bill and replaces it with language that clearly states Puerto Rico has, and has had, the authority to conduct plebiscites and transmit the results to Congress.