



HJ0034

LRB100 11186 KLG 21487 r

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, In 1898, Puerto Rico became a United States territory; persons born in Puerto Rico have been granted U.S. citizenship since 1917; the territory of Puerto Rico has a population of more than 3.4 million people; and

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WHEREAS, The territory has an insular government that, subject to federal law, exercises authority similar to that possessed by the governments of the several states; and

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WHEREAS, U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico are not treated equally under federal law with citizens in the states and do not have representation in their national government, other than that provided by a sole Resident Commissioner who can only vote in committees of the House of Representatives to which she or he is assigned; and

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WHEREAS, Puerto Rico is treated as a state for purposes of most laws but is not treated equally with the states under dozens of statutes, including some providing for major health care and other programs for individuals with critical needs and in a number of revenue measures; and

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WHEREAS, The limitations of, and treatment under territory status, has left Puerto Rico under-developed and has

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1 substantially contributed to its economy being weak for four
2 decades and in depression for the last decade; and

3 WHEREAS, It has been the longstanding policy of the United
4 States that U.S. citizens of the territory can determine
5 whether it should eventually become a state or independent
6 nation; and

7 WHEREAS, An overwhelming majority of U.S. citizens
8 residing in Puerto Rico want to replace territory status with a
9 permanent form of government that provides for equality and for
10 democratic representation in the making of their national laws;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Puerto Rico held a public election on the question
13 of statehood in 2012; 54% of voters rejected territory status,
14 and 61% of those voters chose U.S. statehood over the other
15 options of independence, and nationhood in free association
16 with the United States; and

17 WHEREAS, The Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Process Act
18 (H.R.727) was introduced into the 114th Congress; however no
19 actions were taken before the expiration of that Congress at
20 the end of 2016; therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE

1 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE SENATE
2 CONCURRING HEREIN, that we encourage the 115th Congress, to
3 introduce and pass new legislation on the admission of Puerto
4 Rico as the 51st state; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
6 presented to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Paul
7 Ryan, the Senate Majority Leader, Mitch McConnell, the Governor
8 of Puerto Rico, Alejandro Garcia Padilla, and the current
9 Resident Commissioner, Jenniffer Gonzalez.