To provide for a federally sanctioned self-determination process for the people of Puerto Rico.
Mr. CANNON, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. STARK, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. SHAYS, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. RADANOVICH, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. SALI, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. McCARTHY of California, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Ms. FALLIN, Mr. SHULER, Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. FARR, Mr. Berman, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. DICKS, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. ALLEN, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. WATSON, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. CARTER, Mr. ROSKAM, Ms. LEE, and Mr. DOGGETT

APRIL 22, 2008

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on February 7, 2007]

A BILL

To provide for a federally sanctioned self-determination process for the people of Puerto Rico.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
tives 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 2007”.

SEC. 2. PUERTO RICAN DECISION ON PRESENT STATUS.

(a) PLEBISCITE.—The Puerto Rico State Elections Commission shall conduct a plebiscite in Puerto Rico not later than December 31, 2009. The two options set forth on the ballot shall be preceded by the following statement:

Instructions: Mark one of the following two options:
(1) Puerto Rico should continue to have its present form of territorial status and relationship with the United States. If you agree, mark here ________________.

(2) Puerto Rico should pursue a constitutionally-viable permanent non-territorial status. If you agree, mark here ________________.

(b) RECOMMENDATIONS.—If a majority of the validly-cast ballots in the plebiscite favors Option 2, Congress recognizes the inherent authority of the People of Puerto Rico to—

(1) call a Constitutional Convention, constituted by a number of delegates to be determined in accordance to legislation approved by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, for the purpose of proposing to the People of Puerto Rico a self-determination option which, if approved by the People of Puerto Rico in a referendum, would be presented to Congress by the Constitutional Convention; or

(2) conduct a plebiscite administered by the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission to consider a self-determination option with the results presented to Congress.
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 the plebiscite held pursuant to this Act. Any reference in such Federal laws to elections shall be considered, as appropriate, to be a reference to the plebiscite, unless it would frustrate the purposes of this Act.

(b) FEDERAL COURT JURISDICTION.—The Federal courts of the United States shall have exclusive jurisdiction over any legal claims or controversies arising from the implementation of this Act.

(c) ELIGIBILITY; BALLOT.—Persons eligible to vote under this subsection shall, upon timely request submitted to the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission in compliance with any terms imposed by the Electoral Law of Puerto Rico, be entitled to receive an absentee ballot for the plebiscite. Each of the following shall be eligible to vote in the 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 Puerto Rico State Elections Commission requirements (other
than the residency requirement) applicable to eligibility to vote in a general election.

(d) Certification of Plebiscite Results.—The Puerto Rico States Elections Commission shall certify the results of the 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.

SEC. 4. FUNDS.

During the period beginning October 1, 2007, and ending on the date the President determines that the plebiscite required by this Act has been held, the Secretary of the Treasury may allocate, from the funds provided to the Government of Puerto Rico under section 7652(e) of the Internal Revenue Code, not more than $5,000,000 for this plebiscite to the State Elections Commission of Puerto Rico to be used for expenses of carrying out said plebiscite under this Act, including for voter education materials as certified by the President’s Task Force on Puerto Rico’s Status as not being incompatible with the Constitution and basic laws and policies of the United States. Such amounts shall be as identified by the President’s Task Force on Puerto Rico’s Status as necessary for such purposes.
To provide for a federally sanctioned self-determination process for the people of Puerto Rico.

A BILL

[Report No. 110–597]

H. R. 900

110TH CONGRESS

H. R. 900
Union Calendar No. 370