

104TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 3020

To exclude voyages to or from Puerto Rico from laws applicable to coastwise trade.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 6, 1996

Mr. GUTIERREZ (for himself, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. SERRANO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on National Security

A BILL

To exclude voyages to or from Puerto Rico from laws applicable to coastwise trade.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Puerto Rico Fair
5 Trade Act of 1996”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) On October 30, 1995, the House of Rep-
9 resentatives and Senate of the Commonwealth of
10 Puerto Rico unanimously adopted a concurrent reso-

1 lution urging the United States Congress to exclude
2 Puerto Rico from the coastwise trade laws of the
3 United States.

4 (2) Although Puerto Rico benefits from some
5 Federal programs, Puerto Rico is partially or totally
6 excluded from the benefits of other Federal pro-
7 grams.

8 (3) The economy of Puerto Rico suffers from
9 high levels of unemployment and low rates of labor
10 force participation and has an average per-capita in-
11 come level that is one-third of the level in the United
12 States.

13 (4) Without voting representation in the United
14 States Congress, Puerto Rico was never consulted
15 about and did not approve of the inclusion of Puerto
16 Rico under the coastwise trade laws of the United
17 States.

18 (5) It has been estimated that the inclusion of
19 Puerto Rico under such coastwise trade laws costs
20 the consumers and the economy of Puerto Rico be-
21 tween \$100,000,000 and \$500,000,000 per year.

22 **SEC. 3. EXCLUSION OF PUERTO RICO FROM COASTWISE**
23 **TRADE LAWS.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 21 of the Merchant Ma-
25 rine Act, 1920 (46 U.S.C. App. 877) is amended by add-

1 ing at the end the following: “The coastwise laws of the
2 United States shall not extend to Puerto Rico.”.

3 (b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

4 (1) Section 27 of the Merchant Marine Act,
5 1920 (46 U.S.C. App. 883) is amended in the eighth
6 proviso by striking “the Commonwealth of Puerto
7 Rico”.

8 (2) Section 9 of the Act entitled “An Act to
9 Temporarily provide revenues and a civil government
10 of Porto Rico, and for other purposes” (48 U.S.C.
11 744) is repealed.

12 **SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

13 This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall
14 take effect 60 days after the date of the enactment of this
15 Act.

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