

# AMERICAN LEGION BOYS NATION

## BILL SUMMARY

Note: This form must be completed and accompany all Bills submitted for consideration by The American Legion Boys Nation Senate.

**DELEGATE NAME:** Isaac Gilles

**DELEGATE STATE:** Connecticut

**NAME OF BILL:** The Puerto Rican Statehood Act

**BRIEF SUMMARY OF BILL:** For a variety of political, social, and economic reasons, this bill aims to recognize Puerto Rico as the 51st State in order to extend the full equality of the law to all Puerto Rican citizens.

To Be Completed By  
The Clerk Of The Senate

BILL NO.

**SB-7**

# AMERICAN LEGION BOYS NATION SENATE

## IN THE SENATE OF AMERICAN LEGION BOYS NATION

Senator **Isaac Gilles** of **Connecticut** introduced the following Bill, which was read twice and referred to the following American Legion Boys Nation Senate Committee:

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a Bill

1 To provide the full equality of the law to all citizens of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and to  
2 their posterity,

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE AMERICAN LEGION BOYS NATION SENATE ASSEMBLED, THAT  
4 Pursuant to the US Constitution, Article 4, Section 3, from the date upon which the Committee  
5 thus assembled enacts this ordinance, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico shall henceforth be  
6 recognized as the 51st United State, provided that a majority of Puerto Rican citizens accept  
7 citizenship by general vote of a plebiscite no later than one month after passage of this bill. In  
8 light of the concerted support for statehood by a majority of Puerto Ricans and a variety of  
9 dissonances between the rights of Puerto Ricans and citizens of US states, this act aims to  
10 ensure equality for Puerto Ricans by recognizing their Commonwealth as a State.

11 Since the mandatory inclusion of all Puerto Ricans as citizens under the 1917 Jones Act, there  
12 have been numerous failed Puerto Rican independence movements. Since 1952, when  
13 Congress passed the Puerto Rican Constitution, progress towards equality has been significant  
14 and notable. Yet, there are a number of conditions that have subjugated Puerto Ricans to a  
15 second-class citizenship. They are as follows:

16 First and foremost, citizens of Puerto Rico are subject to the plenary powers of the US  
17 Congress. This ensures that federal mandates are enforced in Puerto Rico regardless of public  
18 support for these mandates or lack thereof.

19 In addition, Puerto Ricans are subject to a number of US taxes. The majority of these taxes  
20 would typically apply to the citizens of states, like Federal Income Taxes. However, Puerto  
21 Ricans must pay equal taxes in areas like Social Security, and yet they are exempted from  
22 Supplemental Security Income and receive only a fraction of the Medicaid support given to  
23 States. This is unjust.

24 Concurrently, while Puerto Ricans must abide by all federally mandated ordinances and the  
25 aforementioned taxes, they lack representation in the US Congress. This would seem to evoke  
26 the quintessential American adage "no taxation without representation."  
27 Furthermore, while Puerto Ricans can cast votes in Presidential Primaries, they cannot vote in  
28 the General Presidential Election.

29 Additionally, after gaining citizenship in 1917, Puerto Ricans have always been included in the  
30 conscription that we refer to as "drafting." If they are willing to fight for our country, or as history  
31 has demonstrated, if they are forced to fight for our country, they should be allowed the  
32 statehood they deserve.

33 For all these reasons, we cannot continue to relegate Puerto Ricans into a lower class of  
34 citizenship. If they are to be considered citizens, the taxes they pay should grant them  
35 Congressional representation and the same federal subsidies that all other citizens receive.

36 Puerto Rico is soundly integrated into the facets of everyday American life. They support our  
37 economy, comprising of a major source of imports and export. And, they represent a vital role  
38 in our society, sharing and changing our viewpoints.

39 We must ensure equality under the law. Power should not be held over Puerto Rico, instead, it  
40 should be doled out fairly. The time for Puerto Rican statehood has come.