



Congressman Pedro R. Pierluisi
Statement for the Record
H. Res. 5, A Resolution Providing for the House Rules of the 113th Congress
January 3, 2013

For the second straight Congress, I oppose the rules package, because it sends a message of exclusion to residents of the territories and the District of Columbia.

Under a rule in place for the last three Democratic-controlled Congresses, the delegates were permitted to vote on amendments when the House met in the Committee of the Whole. The rule, which provided for a revote if our votes were decisive, was upheld by the federal courts and did not impede the work of the House.

The rule promoted responsible government by requiring the delegates to take public stands on issues. It also sent a message of inclusion to our constituents. Yet, once again, in a move that is as unnecessary as it is unjust, the new rules will deprive us of this privilege.

As Resident Commissioner, I represent 3.7 million U.S. citizens, more than any House member and 44 senators. My fellow delegates represent about one million people. Our constituents are

part of the American family. They fight—and many have died—in defense of our nation. The rules package demeans their sacrifice.

In November, a referendum in Puerto Rico showed a clear majority want to end the Island's undemocratic status, and that more voters support statehood than any other status option. Today's rules demonstrate why the status quo must—and will—end. I look forward to the day when Puerto Rico will have equal representation in the government that makes its national laws, rather than having to plead for the reinstatement of a limited and largely symbolic vote.