

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4593

To amend the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 to increase agricultural representation for United States territories, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 12, 2023

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mr. MOYLAN, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, Mr. SOTO, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, and Mr. GRIJALVA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To amend the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 to increase agricultural representation for United States territories, and for other purposes.

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 “Agricultural Represen-
5 tation for the United States Territories Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS AND STATEMENT OF**
2 **PURPOSE.**

3 (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress makes the following
4 findings:

5 (1) The United States territories face a unique
6 set of challenges that have curbed agricultural devel-
7 opment and food sovereignty for more than 3.5 mil-
8 lion United States citizens and nationals, including
9 long recovery processes from natural disasters, vul-
10 nerability to extreme weather events, and barriers to
11 participation in Federal programs.

12 (2) The United States territories import be-
13 tween 70 to 90 percent of their food at a high cost
14 to residents. Puerto Rico, which has the largest pop-
15 ulation of all United States territories, imports 85
16 percent of the food consumed locally. Natural disas-
17 ters and public health emergencies, such as the
18 COVID–19 pandemic, further affect the dependency
19 on imports and the availability of food for residents.

20 (3) The lack of political representation for the
21 United States territories at the Federal level has af-
22 fected the possibility to prioritize these challenges
23 and advance the agricultural development of Puerto
24 Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, American
25 Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam.

1 (b) STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of
2 this Act to provide representation to the five United States
3 territories, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands,
4 American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, and
5 Guam, on the National Agricultural Research, Extension,
6 Education, and Economics Advisory Board, and therefore
7 contribute to setting a coordinated path forward at the
8 Federal level for the agricultural development of the
9 United States territories.

10 **SEC. 3. REPRESENTATION FOR UNITED STATES TERRI-**
11 **TORIES ON NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RE-**
12 **SEARCH, EXTENSION, EDUCATION, AND ECO-**
13 **NOMICS ADVISORY BOARD.**

14 Section 1408 of the National Agricultural Research,
15 Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C.
16 3123) is amended—

17 (1) in subsection (b)—

18 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “15
19 members” and inserting “16 members”; and

20 (B) in paragraph (3), by adding at the end
21 the following:

22 “(E) 1 member representing the agricul-
23 tural interests of Puerto Rico, the United
24 States Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the
25 Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam.”; and

1 (2) in subsection (h), by striking “2023” and
2 inserting “2028”.

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