

TITLE 48 - TERRITORIES AND INSULAR POSSESSIONS
CHAPTER 4 - PUERTO RICO
SUBCHAPTER I - GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 731. Territory included under name Puerto Rico

The provisions of this chapter shall apply to the island of Puerto Rico and to the adjacent islands belonging to the United States and waters of those islands; and the name Puerto Rico, as used in this chapter, shall be held to include not only the island of that name, but all the adjacent islands as aforesaid.

(Mar. 2, 1917, ch. 145, § 1, 39 Stat. 951; May 17, 1932, ch. 190, 47 Stat. 158.)

References in Text

This chapter, referred to in text, was in the original “this Act”, meaning act Mar. 2, 1917, ch. 145, 39 Stat. 951, as amended, known as the Puerto Rican Federal Relations Act and also popularly known as the Jones Act, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out below and Tables.

Prior Provisions

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in act Apr. 12, 1900, ch. 191, 31 Stat. 77, which is popularly known as the “Foraker Act” and also as the “Puerto Rico Civil Code”.

Section 1 of act Apr. 12, 1900, was similar to this section, except that it described the adjacent islands and waters of those islands as those lying east of the seventy-fourth meridian of longitude west of Greenwich, which were ceded to the United States by the Government of Spain by the treaty of Dec. 10, 1898, 30 Stat. 1754.

Change of Name

“Puerto Rico” substituted in text for “Porto Rico” pursuant to act May 17, 1932, which is classified to section 731a of this title.

Short Title

Act July 3, 1950, ch. 446, § 4, 64 Stat. 319, provided, in part, that the act of Mar. 2, 1917, ch. 145, 39 Stat. 951 [enacting this chapter, section 1019 of this title, section 46 of Title 2, The Congress, and section 358 of Title 8, Aliens and Nationality, and amending sections 325, 327, and 328 of former Title 39, Postal Service], may be cited as the “Puerto Rican Federal Relations Act”. The act of Mar. 2, 1917, is also popularly known as the “Jones Act”.

United States-Puerto Rico Commission on the Status of Puerto Rico

Pub. L. 88–271, Feb. 20, 1964, 78 Stat. 17, as amended by Pub. L. 89–84, July 24, 1965, 79 Stat. 261, established a United States-Puerto Rico Commission on the Status of Puerto Rico to study all factors, including but not limited to applicable laws, treaties, constitutions, and agreements having a bearing on the relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. The Commission was required to render its report to the President of the United States, the Congress of the United States, the Governor of Puerto Rico, and the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico not later than Sept. 30, 1966.

Administration of Government

The administration of the Government of Puerto Rico was transferred from the Bureau of Insular Affairs to the Office of Territories (formerly the Division of Territories and Island Possessions and now the Office of Territorial Affairs), in the Department of the Interior by Executive Order No. 6726, eff. May 29, 1934, eff. Mar. 2, 1935. For present government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, see section 731d of this title.

Ex. Ord. No. 13183. Establishment of the President’s Task Force on Puerto Rico’s Status

Ex. Ord. No. 13183, Dec. 23, 2000, 65 F.R. 82889, as amended by Ex. Ord. No. 13209, Apr. 30, 2001, 66 F.R. 22105; Ex. Ord. No. 13319, Dec. 3, 2003, 68 F.R. 68233, provided:

NB: This unofficial compilation of the U.S. Code is current as of Jan. 5, 2009 (see <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/uscprint.html>).

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including Public Law 106–346 [see Tables for classification], it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Policy. It is the policy of the executive branch of the Government of the United States of America to help answer the questions that the people of Puerto Rico have asked for years regarding the options for the islands' future status and the process for realizing an option. Further, it is our policy to consider and develop positions on proposals, without preference among the options, for the Commonwealth's future status; to discuss such proposals with representatives of the people of Puerto Rico and the Congress; to work with leaders of the Commonwealth and the Congress to clarify the options to enable Puerto Ricans to determine their preference among options for the islands' future status that are not incompatible with the Constitution and basic laws and policies of the United States; and to implement such an option if chosen by a majority, including helping Puerto Ricans obtain a governing arrangement under which they would vote for national government officials, if they choose such a status.

Sec. 2. The President's Task Force on Puerto Rico's Status. There is established a task force to be known as "The President's Task Force on Puerto Rico's Status" (Task Force). It shall be composed of designees of each member of the President's Cabinet and the Deputy Assistant to the President and Director for Intergovernmental Affairs. The Task Force shall be co-chaired by the Attorney General's designee and the Deputy Assistant to the President and Director for Intergovernmental Affairs.

Sec. 3. Functions. The Task Force shall seek to implement the policy set forth in section 1 of this order. It shall ensure official attention to and facilitate action on matters related to proposals for Puerto Rico's status and the process by which an option can be realized. It shall provide advice and recommendations on such matters to the President and the Congress. It shall also provide advice and recommendations to assist the Executive Office of the President in fulfilling its responsibilities under Public Law 106–346 to transfer funding to the Elections Commission of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico for public education on and a public choice among options for Puerto Rico's future status that are not incompatible with the Constitution and the basic laws and policies of the United States.

Sec. 4. Report. The Task Force shall report on its actions to the President as needed, but no less frequently than once every 2 years, on progress made in the determination of Puerto Rico's ultimate status.