

Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, S. 793, With an Amendment

**(The amendment strikes all after the enacting clause and inserts a
new text)**

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 793

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 9, 2013

Referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

AN ACT

To support revitalization and reform of the Organization
of American States, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Organization of Amer-
3 ican States Revitalization and Reform Act of 2013”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress makes the following findings:

6 (1) The Charter of the Organization of Amer-
7 ican States recognizes that—

8 (A) representative democracy is indispen-
9 sable for the stability, peace, and development
10 of the Western Hemisphere; and

11 (B) a purpose of the Organization of
12 American States is to promote and consolidate
13 representative democracy, with due respect for
14 the principle of nonintervention.

15 (2) The United States supports the purposes
16 and principles enshrined in—

17 (A) the Charter of the Organization of
18 American States;

19 (B) the Inter-American Democratic Char-
20 ter; and

21 (C) the American Declaration on the
22 Rights and Duties of Man.

23 (3) The United States supports the Organiza-
24 tion of American States in its efforts with all mem-
25 ber states to meet our commitments under the in-
26 struments set forth in paragraph (2).

1 (4) Congress supports the Organization of
2 American States as it operates in a manner con-
3 sistent with the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

4 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

5 It is the policy of the United States—

6 (1) to promote democracy and the rule of law
7 throughout the Western Hemisphere;

8 (2) to promote and protect human rights and
9 fundamental freedoms in the Western Hemisphere;
10 and

11 (3) to support the practices, purposes, and prin-
12 ciples expressed in the Charter of the Organization
13 of American States, the American Declaration on
14 the Rights and Duties of Man, the Inter-American
15 Democratic Charter, and other fundamental instru-
16 ments of democracy.

17 **SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

18 It is the sense of Congress that—

19 (1) the Organization of American States (OAS)
20 should be the primary multi-lateral diplomatic entity
21 for regional dispute resolution and promotion of
22 democratic governance and institutions;

23 (2) the OAS is a valuable platform from which
24 to launch initiatives aimed to benefit the countries
25 of the Western Hemisphere;

1 (3) the Summit of the Americas institution and
2 process embodies a valuable complement to regional
3 dialogue and cooperation;

4 (4) the Summit of the Americas process should
5 be formally and more effectively integrated into the
6 work of the OAS, the Inter-American Development
7 Bank, and other Members of the Joint Summit
8 Working Group, and the OAS should play a central
9 role in overseeing and managing the Summit proc-
10 ess;

11 (5) the OAS General Assembly and the Summit
12 of the Americas events should be combined geo-
13 graphically and chronologically in the years in which
14 they coincide;

15 (6) the OAS has historically accepted too many
16 mandates from its member states, resulting in both
17 lack of clarity on priorities and loss of institutional
18 focus, which in turn has reduced the effectiveness of
19 the organization;

20 (7) to ensure an appropriate balance of prior-
21 ities, the OAS should review its core functions no
22 less than annually and seek opportunities to reduce
23 the number of mandates not directly related to its
24 core functions;

1 (8) key OAS strengths lie in strengthening
2 peace and security, promoting and consolidating rep-
3 resentative democracy, regional dispute resolution,
4 election assistance and monitoring, fostering eco-
5 nomic growth and development cooperation, facili-
6 tating trade, combating illicit drug trafficking and
7 transnational crime, and support for the Inter-Amer-
8 ican Human Rights System;

9 (9) the core competencies referred to in para-
10 graph (8) should remain central to the strategic
11 planning process of the OAS and the consideration
12 of future mandates;

13 (10) any new OAS mandates should be accept-
14 ed by the member states only after an analysis is
15 conducted and formally presented consisting of a
16 calculation of the financial costs associated with the
17 mandate, an assessment of the comparative advan-
18 tage of the OAS in the implementation of the man-
19 date, and a description of the ways in which the
20 mandate advances the organization's core mission;

21 (11) any new mandates should include, in addi-
22 tion to the analysis described in paragraph (10), an
23 identification of the source of funding to be used to
24 implement the mandate;

1 (12) the OAS would benefit from enhanced co-
2 ordination between the OAS and the Inter-American
3 Development Bank on issues that relate to economic
4 development;

5 (13) the OAS would benefit from standard re-
6 porting requirements for each project and grant
7 agreement;

8 (14) the OAS would benefit from effective im-
9 plementation of—

10 (A) transparent and merit-based human
11 resource standards and processes; and

12 (B) transparent hiring, firing, and pro-
13 motion standards and processes, including with
14 respect to factors such as gender and national
15 origin; and

16 (15) it is in the interest of the United States,
17 OAS member states, and a modernized OAS to move
18 toward an assessed fee structure that assures the fi-
19 nancial sustainability of the organization and estab-
20 lishes, not later than five years after the date of the
21 enactment of this Act, that no member state pays
22 more than 50 percent of the organization's assessed
23 fees.

1 **SEC. 5. ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES REVITALIZA-**
2 **TION AND REFORM STRATEGY.**

3 (a) STRATEGY.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
5 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
6 retary of State shall submit to the Committee on
7 Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee
8 on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives
9 a multiyear strategy that—

10 (A) identifies a path toward the adoption
11 of necessary reforms that prioritize and rein-
12 force the OAS's core competencies described in
13 section 4(8);

14 (B) outlines an approach to secure from
15 the OAS effective adoption of—

16 (i) a results-based budgeting process
17 in order to strategically prioritize, and
18 where appropriate, reduce current and fu-
19 ture mandates; and

20 (ii) transparent hiring, firing, and
21 promotion practices;

22 (C) reflects the inputs and coordination
23 from other Executive Branch agencies, as ap-
24 propriate; and

25 (D) identifies a path toward the adoption
26 of necessary reforms that would—

1 (i) lead to an assessed fee structure in
2 which no member state would pay more
3 than 50 percent of the OAS's assessed
4 yearly fees; and

5 (ii) seek to minimize the negative fi-
6 nancial impact on the OAS and its oper-
7 ations.

8 (2) POLICY PRIORITIES AND COORDINATION.—
9 The Secretary of State shall—

10 (A) carry out diplomatic engagement to
11 build support for reforms and budgetary burden
12 sharing among OAS member states and observ-
13 ers; and

14 (B) promote donor coordination among
15 OAS member states.

16 (b) BRIEFINGS.—The Secretary of State shall offer
17 to the committees referred to in subsection (a)(1) a quar-
18 terly briefing that—

19 (1) reviews assessed and voluntary contribu-
20 tions;

21 (2) analyzes the progress made by the OAS to
22 adopt and effectively implement a results-based
23 budgeting process in order to strategically prioritize,
24 and where appropriate, reduce current and future
25 mandates;

1 (3) analyzes the progress made by the OAS to
2 adopt and effectively implement transparent and
3 merit-based human resource standards and practices
4 and transparent hiring, firing, and promotion stand-
5 ards and processes, including with respect to factors
6 such as gender and national origin;

7 (4) analyzes the progress made by the OAS to
8 adopt and effectively implement a practice of solie-
9 iting member quotas to be paid on a schedule that
10 will improve the consistency of its operating budget;
11 and

12 (5) analyzes the progress made by the OAS to
13 review, streamline, and prioritize mandates to focus
14 on core missions and make efficient and effective use
15 of available funding.