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TO

Provide for electors in Scotland to petition the House of Commons for a referendum on whether Scotland should withdraw from the United Kingdom; and for connected purposes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 Petitions for a referendum

- (1) A person entitled to vote as an elector at a local government election in any electoral area in Scotland may petition the House of Commons in accordance with this section.
- (2) The petition shall be in a form similar to the sample petition set out in the Schedule. 5
- (3) No such petitions may be presented if more than one calendar year has elapsed between the date of signing by any petitioner and the date of presentation of the petition to the House of Commons.
- (4) The Secretary of State shall, upon request, make available to any person entitled to petition under subsection (1) a copy of the sample petition set out in the Schedule. 10
- (5) If a petition or petitions signed by at least 500,000 persons entitled to petition under subsection (1) are presented to the House of Commons within the designated period, the Secretary of State shall introduce in the House of Commons a bill to enable a referendum to be held on whether Scotland should withdraw from the United Kingdom and acquire membership of the Commonwealth with a status similar to that of one of Her Majesty's dominions, with Her Majesty remaining the Head of State for Scotland. 15
- (6) For the purposes of subsection (5), the designated period is one calendar year starting on 1st February and ending on 31st January. 20
- (7) A bill introduced by the Secretary of State under subsection (5) shall provide for the referendum to be held within eight months of the bill being passed.

- (8) Where a referendum has been held pursuant to a bill introduced under subsection (5), a subsequent referendum on the same question may not be held until ten years have elapsed.

2 Short title and commencement

- (1) This Act may be cited as the Scotland (Petitions for a Referendum on Independence) Act 2006. 5
- (2) This Act shall come into force on 1st February 2007.

SCHEDULE

Section 1

PUBLIC PETITION

PUBLIC PETITION

To the House of Commons.

The Petition of

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Declares that there should be a referendum on the question of whether Scotland should withdraw from the United Kingdom and acquire membership of the Commonwealth with a status similar to that of one of Her Majesty's dominions, with Her Majesty remaining Head of State for Scotland.

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The Petitioners therefore request that the House of Commons pass a bill to provide for the said referendum.

And the petitioners remain, etc.

Signature, name and address of at least one Petitioner:

Scotland (Petitions for a Referendum on Independence) Bill [HL]

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The Earl of Mar and Kellie

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