

(S. B. 373)

(No. 36)

(Approved July 1, 2009)

AN ACT

To designate the New Fire Station in the Municipality of Peñuelas with the name José Antonio “Goche” García-Toucet Fire Station, in posthumous tribute to his work, dedication, and selfless devotion to public service and public safety, to he who was a Fire Chief and a leader of his community in his town of Peñuelas, as well as a musician, a radio engineer, and a Deputy Police Officer at the Commonwealth Civil Defense.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Mr. José Antonio García-Toucet was born on January 14, 1930, in Peñuelas, Puerto Rico, to parents Salvador Toucet-García and Rosa M. García. He attended elementary and middle school studies at the Second Unit School of *Barrio* Santo Domingo in Peñuelas, known today as Ramón Pérez-Purcell School. In 1959, he wed María Amelia Orengo-Collazo, with whom he had nine children: José Enrique, Ruth Delia, Carmen Ada, Ángel Salvador, José Manuel, José Antonio, José Julio, María Amelia, and Rosa Elena.

Very early in life, “Goche”—as José Antonio was affectively called—worked as truck driver transporting sugar cane and as mass transportation driver in the city of Ponce. His desire to serve others moved him to enlist in the Puerto Rico Fire Service in 1951, when he was assigned to the Old Fire Station of Ponce. He was conferred the rank of Corporal, and in 1957, he was appointed officer-in-charge of the Peñuelas Fire Station, where he was later promoted to Fire Chief, Sergeant, and Lieutenant. For 34 years, Mr. García-Toucet served the People of Puerto Rico most honorably as a firefighter, from which office he retired in 1985.

In addition to being an outstanding firefighter, “Goche” was an excellent musician and composer of our folk music. He founded “Los Madrugadores de Peñuelas” folk music group, which he directed and in which he played the accordion. He also played guitar, piano, and the Puerto Rican *cuatro*. He made various records featuring *décimas* and Christmas *aguinaldos* composed by him, among which is his most renowned piece, “Yo me voy pa’l campo.” He also joined other fellow firefighters of the Southern region to organize “Los Bombarderos del Sur,” another musical group. García-Touchet belonged to the National Musicians’ Union and the Puerto Rico Musicians’ Federation. He passed his musical abilities along to his children.

Aside from his career as firefighter and as musician, “Goche” earned a diploma as Radio and Television Technician from the National School in Los Angeles, California. García-Toucet excelled in the field of electronics; he repaired radios, television sets, and other electronic appliances. He was also an announcer for La Buena del Sur (W.E.N.A. 1330) radio station from 1985 to 1988. He later came to be the engineer of the said radio station. He was also an active member of Club de Radioteléfonos del Sur, Inc.

Don José Antonio also served as Deputy Police Officer in the Commonwealth Civil Defense, as well as coach for the Boy Scouts Puerto Rico Chapter. He also was a notable leader of his community in the town of Peñuelas. He participated actively in offering talks and training on fire prevention and management. He also organized fire drills and training courses to prevent accidents in the oil industry in the *Barrio* Tallaboa Petrochemical Industrial Zone, which comprised Corco, Union Carbide, and P.P.G. Industries.

Among the favorite pastimes of García-Toucet was always a good game of dominoes or chess. José Antonio “Goche” García-Toucet died on October 10, 2001, at the age of 72, bequeathing a great legacy on his family and his town of Peñuelas.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.—To designate the New Fire Station in the Municipality of Peñuelas with the name José Antonio “Goche” García-Toucet Fire Station, in posthumous tribute to his work, dedication, and selfless devotion to public service and public safety, to he who was a Fire Chief and a leader of his community in his town of Peñuelas, as well as a musician, a radio engineer, and a Deputy Police Officer at the Commonwealth Civil Defense.

Section 2.—A properly sealed and secured display case shall be placed prominently in the José Antonio “Goche” García Toucet Fire Station, to display a copy of this measure, together with various pictures that showcase the history and legacy of Fire Lieutenant García-Toucet as a public official, a firefighter, a musician, and a remarkable human being, so that it may serve as an example of selfless dedication to inspire present and future generations.

Section 3.—The Public Structure and Highway Naming Commission of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, together with the Puerto Rico Firefighter Corps, shall any such measures as necessary to faithfully comply with the provisions of this Act, without being subject to the provisions in Act No. 99 of June 22, 1961, as amended.

Section 4.—This Act shall take effect immediately after its approval.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following **Act No. 36 (S. B. 373)** of the **1st Session of the 16th Legislature** of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to designate the New Fire Station in the Municipality of Peñuelas with the name José Antonio “Goche” García-Toucet Fire Station, in posthumous tribute to his work, dedication, and selfless devotion to public service and public safety, to he who was a Fire Chief and a leader of his community in his town of Peñuelas, as well as a musician, a radio engineer, and a Deputy Police Officer at the Commonwealth Civil Defense.

has been translated from Spanish to English and that the English version is correct.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, on the 1st day of March of 2010.

Solange I. De Lahongrais, Esq.
Director