

(H. B. 1480)

(No. 1)

(Approved January 4, 2010)

AN ACT

To create the “Carlos Romero-Barceló Public Policy Internship Program”; to create an Advisory Committee, which shall be in charge of the organization and operations of the Program; and for other related purposes.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Carlos Antonio Romero-Barceló was born in San Juan on September 4, 1932. He was the fifth Governor of Puerto Rico to be voted democratically into office, for the period spanning from 1977 to 1985. He later served as Resident Commissioner, from 1993 to 2001. He is a member of the New Progressive Party, ever the advocate for the annexation of Puerto Rico to the United States as a federated state.

Romero completed his schooling at Phillips Exeter Academy in the state of New Hampshire, from which he graduated in 1949. Subsequently, he earned a Bachelor’s degree in Political Sciences from Yale University in 1953. In that same year, he returned to Puerto Rico and began to pursue studies in Law at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus, graduating in 1956.

Romero-Barceló joined the ranks of the New Progressive Party in 1967, and by 1968, he won the elections for Mayor of San Juan. He continued to hold office until 1977, when he ran for the office of governor in the general elections in 1976, and defeated the then Governor, Rafael Hernández-Colón.

During his first term in office as governor, Romero-Barceló implemented economic reforms in the Island, focusing on the potential of the tourist industry. In 1980, he was reelected as governor.

In the elections of 1992, Romero returned to the political arena and won the elections for Resident Commissioner for Puerto Rico. He was reelected to this office in 1996. During his tenure, he advocated for Puerto Rico's statehood and endorsed the Young Bill, which provided for a plebiscite to resolve the status of the Island.

Without a doubt, Carlos Romero-Barceló has been one of the most consequential personalities of Puerto Rico. As Mayor, Senator, Resident Commissioner, and Governor, he has been a framer of the public policy which has governed Puerto Rico for decades. His uncontestable track record in the political and government endeavor makes him deserving of the honor to have a Public Policy Internship Program created in his name, which Program is to be attached to the Executive Branch of the Government of Puerto Rico.

Such Program would serve the purpose not only of honoring the personality that is *Don* Carlos, but also of enabling many young Puerto Ricans to explore their interests and garner experience in the process whereby public policy is formulated and executed in the Island.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.—The “Carlos Romero-Barceló Public Policy Internship Program” is hereby established, in honor of this momentous Puerto Rican government official.

Section 2.—The Program shall provide university students, as well as students from accredited higher education institutions, with an educational experience that combines the theoretical and practical elements of public policy formulation processes.

This Program seeks to raise greater awareness among participants on the importance of the process to formulate and execute public policy in attaining the common good, while participants build their expertise and cultivate an interest in remaining attached to this Branch of the Government in the future.

Section 3.—The Office of Youth Affairs shall promulgate bylaws in connection with Program operations within a term not greater than ninety (90) calendar days as of the date of effectiveness of this Act.

Such regulation shall include all rules and procedures as necessary for the Program's proper operation. It shall especially provide on the criteria to select interns, taking into account, among other factors, their education, their grade point average, their experience, the studies they are pursuing, and any outstanding services rendered to society. Any procedures thus established shall assure that the selection of program participants shall be objective and unbiased. The Regulation shall provide for a procedure whereby the students so selected shall be placed in the various agencies, as best suits the needs, interests, experience and skills of students. Such Regulation shall also provide on the payment of stipends and the pertinent steps to be followed to have the students' participation in the Program validated as university course credit.

Furthermore, it shall define the function of the Advisory Committee established under this Act, as well as provide on matters in connection with the process to evaluate, select, and place students participating in the Program, and provide on how often is the Committee to meet.

Section 4.—The “Carlos Romero-Barceló Public Policy Internship Program Advisory Committee” is hereby created.

This Committee shall be composed of the Secretary of State; the President of the University of Puerto Rico; the President of a private university institution, to be appointed by the Governor; the Executive Director of the Office of Youth Affairs; the Director of the Puerto Rico Government Human Resources Office; and two (2) public interest representatives, appointed by the Governor. This Committee shall participate in the process to evaluate, select, and place students in the various agencies of the Executive Branch, as best suits their talents and interests.

The Committee shall select up to fifty (50) interns per semester, for placement in the various Agencies of the Executive Branch.

The Committee shall be chaired by the Secretary of State. Committee members shall serve *ad honorem*.

Section 5.—Program participants shall be undergraduate students who have completed half or more of the requirements for a bachelor’s or undergraduate degree, and such students shall be enrolled in post-secondary institutions located in Puerto Rico.

Section 6.—The Committee shall provide for the Program to operate at par with the academic calendar, during each academic semester, and if practicable, to hold a summer session, and offer a combined curriculum that integrates theoretical and practical experiences.

Section 7.—All Agencies, Dependencies, Instrumentalities, and Public Corporations of the Government of Puerto Rico are hereby directed to abide by the rules, criteria and requirements set forth in the Regulation. The Agencies that have already established and developed an internship program are not bound to oblige with the provisions of this Act.

Section 8.—All Heads of Government Agencies and Dependencies are hereby directed to report the number of spaces available for students participating in this Program to the Office of Youth Affairs. Furthermore, they shall designate an official who shall serve as liaison between participating students and the Agency with which they shall collaborate. Insofar as this is an internship in public policy, interns shall work in the office of the Head of each Agency or in another area of the instrumentality which better accommodates and suits the student and the entity.

Section 9.—Each Agency shall render to the Office of Youth Affairs, a semestrial report on the development of the Internship Program. The Office of Youth Affairs shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature of Puerto Rico not later than December 31 of each year, to inform on the development of the Program.

Section 10.—The Office of Youth Affairs shall be responsible for assuring compliance with this Act; managing all administrative affairs in connection with the Program, including the distribution and receipt of applications; providing managerial support to the Committee; promoting this opportunity to build an ample pool of applicants; and providing the necessary support in order for Agencies to gain knowledge and be able to implement and operate the provisions set forth herein.

Section 11.—The funding necessary to enforce the provisions of this Act shall be consigned in the General Expense Budget of the Agencies of the Government of Puerto Rico that participate in the Program.

Section 12.—This Act shall take effect immediately after its approval; provided, that the Internship Program established herein shall begin to operate during the second semester of academic year 2010-2011.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following **Act No. 1 (H. B. 1480)** of the **2nd Session of the 16th Legislature** of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to create the “Carlos Romero-Barceló Public Policy Internship Program”; to create an Advisory Committee, which shall be in charge of the organization and operations of the Program; and for other related purposes.

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