AN ACT

To establish a Special Commission attached to the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture (ICP, Spanish acronym) in charge of collecting, organizing, publishing, publicizing, and preserving the works of Dr. Antonio Fernós Isern and his contributions to the integral development of our people in all respects; to appropriate funds and authorize the matching of said funds.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Dr. Antonio Fernós Isern, physician, politician and patriot, was born May 10, 1895 in the Municipality of San Lorenzo. His elementary and high school studies were completed on the Island, after which he attended the Pennsylvania State Normal School in the city of Bloomburg in that state of the Union. In May 1915 he obtained his university degree from the School of Physicians and Surgeons of Maryland State University.

Subsequently, Dr. Fernós returned to the Island where he practiced the medical profession. From 1919 to 1933 he held several positions of an administrative nature such as: Assistant Commissioner of Health of Puerto Rico (1920-1931) and then as Health Commissioner of Puerto Rico (1931-1933 and 1942-1946). In 1933, because of political differences with the Coalition Government in Puerto Rico, he submitted his resignation as Health Commissioner. He then traveled to the state of New York where he completed his residency in cardiology at Columbia University, thus
becoming the first Puerto Rican cardiologist. After his return to the Island he held a professorship at the School of Tropical Medicine while pursuing his private practice in San Juan from 1933 to 1942.

In 1937, Dr. Fernós Isern participated, together with Don Luis Muñoz Marín, in the organization of the Liberal Party, which subsequently became the Popular Democratic Party (PPD, Spanish acronym). In 1940 he launched his candidacy for the office of Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico in Washington, but was defeated in his attempt.

In 1945, the then Governor of Puerto Rico, Jesús T. Piñero Jiménez, selected him as the new Resident Commissioner in Washington, an office to which he was reelected on four consecutive occasions (1948, 1952, 1956 and 1960), serving as such from September 11, 1946 to January 3, 1965.

During the nineteen years in which he honorably held such a high office, Dr. Fernós Isern played a major role in obtaining self-government for the Puerto Rican people. He played an extremely important part in the approval of the Governor Elect of Puerto Rico Act.

After the Congress of the United States of America approved Act No. 600 of June 8, 1950, which authorized the Puerto Rican people to draft their own constitution, Dr. Fernós Isern was elected President of the Constitutional Convention of Puerto Rico which drafted the Magna Carta of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, which celebrates its fiftieth anniversary in the year 2002.

This distinguished Puerto Rican did not seek a fifth term in the 1964 elections when he launched his candidacy for the Senate of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, to which he was then elected, and in which he served until 1968. To the bereavement of our people, Dr. Antonio Fernós Isern passed away on January 19, 1974.
The Legislature of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, on the occasion of the celebration of the first fifty years of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in the year 2002, with this acknowledgement to the achievements of Dr. Fernós Isern, intends to immortalize all those others who participated in the Constitutional Convention and to express its eternal gratitude for their contributions to the political and economic development of our people. Their contributions to the enhancement of our Nation are undoubtedly immeasurable and indelible.

The Program created through this Act, attached to the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture (ICP, Spanish acronym), therefore intends to be an additional step taken by the People and the Government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in their endeavor to recognize the achievements of that illustrious patriot, Dr. Antonio Fernós Isern.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.- A Special Commission attached to the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture (ICP, Spanish acronym) in charge of collecting, organizing, publishing, publicizing, and preserving the works of Dr. Antonio Fernós Isern and his contributions to the integral development of our people in all respects is hereby established.

Section 2.- The Institute of Puerto Rican Culture shall be the custodian responsible for all activities to be held by the Special Commission, for the maintenance and preservation of all documents and articles collected and for all matters concerning the life and work of Dr. Antonio Fernós Isern. Pursuant to the above, the Institute may initiate programs and conduct seminars, workshops, conferences, and collaborative agreements with public and private entities to achieve faithful compliance with the objectives of the Special Commission, as established in Section 1 of this Act.
Section 3.- The Special Commission shall be constituted by the Executive Director of the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, or his/her designated representative; a representative of the University of Puerto Rico specialized in the fields of Social Sciences and Library Sciences; a representative of organizations with an affinity towards this initiative as well as a representative of the family of Dr. Antonio Fernós Isern and the President of the Luis Muñoz Marín Foundation or his/her authorized representative. It shall also have the power to be nourished by any economic items that may be donated, transferred, contributed, or assigned to the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture by any natural or juridical person, foundation, entity, agency, public corporation and instrumentality of the Government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Legislature, the Government of the United States of America or municipal governments. It is furthermore provided that the Special Commission may receive any product donated, transferred, contributed, or assigned to the Institute, with the prior approval of its Executive Director and when there is no conflict whatsoever with the provisions of the donor, assignor or the public or private person or entity that has made such a donation, transfer, assignment or contribution.

Section 4.- The Executive Director of the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture shall determine a budget to enforce the legislative mandate of this Act, which must be included in the budgetary petition of the Institute for fiscal year 2004-2005.

Section 5.- This Act shall take effect as of July 1, 2004, except for Section 4 which shall take effect immediately.
CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 342 (H.B. 1964) of the 7th Session of the 14th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to establish a Special Commission attached to the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture (ICP, Spanish acronym) in charge of collecting, organizing, publishing, publicizing, and preserving the works of Dr. Antonio Fernós Isern and his contributions to the integral development of our people in all respects; to appropriate funds and authorize the matching of said funds,

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 23rd of November of 2005.

Francisco J. Domenech
Director