

(S. B. 113)

(No. 11)

(Approved May 21, 2005)

## **AN ACT**

To create the Bilingual Citizen Education and Development Institute of the Capital City of Puerto Rico, attached to the Municipality of San Juan; to establish its organization, operation, and duties.

### **STATEMENT OF MOTIVES**

The teaching and subsequent learning of the English language are some of the most important elements to ensure the good performance of any professional in his/her job, whether in the private sector or the Government. It is recognized that English is the language par excellence for conducting business and for such reason, it is time that the same is accessible to the people, specially to the people of San Juan, as proposed herein.

There are many detractors who believe that learning English shall adversely affect our origin and the good use of the Spanish language, however, studies made regarding bilingualism suggest that, contrary to monolinguals, bilinguals are more aware of semantic relations, are more knowledgeable of linguistic rules and structures, have more metalinguistic awareness, have a higher effect in the divergent thought and creativity, are more effective in various cognitive means, for example, with respect to forming and understanding concepts; and have greater ability in monitoring their mental executions.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Dr. Torres Lladó, (1984) indicated that although students of the public education system of Puerto Rico study

the English language for twelve years, they are not able to develop proficiency in the use thereof, nor are they able to communicate in this language. She also indicated in a study conducted in 1976, that the student's deficiency to communicate in the Spanish language is not due to the teaching of English, but rather to a poor teaching of Spanish. Dr. Torres Lladó states that both languages can coexist.

Pursuant to the above, it is imperative to provide the necessary tools to Puerto Ricans to learn other languages in addition to Spanish. It is necessary to develop a bilingual culture in which we can adequately place ourselves in this globalized and highly technological world.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:**

Section 1.- Title

This Act shall be known as the "Bilingual Citizen Education and Development Institute of the Capital City of Puerto Rico Act."

Section 2.- Creation of the Institute

The Bilingual Citizen Education and Development Institute of the Capital City of Puerto Rico is hereby created, attached to the Municipality of San Juan, with the purpose of establishing a teaching curriculum which encourages the learning of the English language to the residents of the territorial jurisdiction which comprises said municipality in order to develop a bilingual citizen with the adequate tools to effectively place him/herself in a very competitive working, professional and educational world.

Section 3.- Administrative Organization

The Institute shall be directed by an Executive Director, appointed by the Mayor of the Municipality of San Juan and confirmed by the Municipal Legislature, and shall answer for all matters of the entity created herein. The

functions, duties, education, experience and remuneration of the Executive Director shall be established through a Municipal Ordinance.

The Mayor of the Municipality of San Juan shall determine the corresponding administrative structure of the Institute and shall assign to it the necessary human resources and equipment for its proper operation. He/she shall also have the responsibility of locating the Institute within the territorial limits of any urban center of the Capital city, to wit, Santurce, Río Piedras, Condado, and/or Old San Juan. To achieve such purposes, he/she is hereby empowered to carry out all those necessary legal or administrative procedures.

#### Section 4.- Functions of the Institute

The main function of the Institute is to be a facilitating entity so that all citizens of San Juan may learn English through the establishment of a curriculum which shall promote the development of an integral and integrated citizen, who is sensible and capable of communicating him/herself fluently and correctly in both, Spanish and English.

Said curriculum shall be flexible and provide different educational experiences which satisfy the individual interests, capabilities, temperament and needs of students. This shall also apply to texts and other teaching materials. In addition, the English Program herein created shall be diversified in order to enable students to develop oral communications skills, creative writing, and reading comprehension, analysis, and application within a bilingual approach.

Once the curriculum herein provided is developed, the Institute shall offer free English lessons to all the citizens of San Juan, to the extent the human and financial resources allow it. The Institute shall provide materials at no cost, but at times, it may charge for the materials to strengthen its

offerings. It shall have the responsibility of dividing the groups according to their age and knowledge of said language. The Institute shall establish lessons for groups with basic, intermediate and advanced knowledge and shall promote through these, the development of experiences and personal and group activities of the students, which shall result in a sense of responsibility and commitment with social well-being.

#### Section 5.- Executive Director

The Executive Director, as the chief executive officer of the Institute, shall be in charge of the planning, organization, and attainment of the purposes of this Act. In addition, he/she shall administer the operating structure of the Institute and shall promulgate the regulations which shall govern the operations thereof.

Furthermore, with the approval of the Mayor of the Municipality of San Juan, he/she shall prepare the bill of budget of the Institute, contract the teaching resources of the Institute and implement the English teaching curriculum, which shall be offered by the Institute.

On the other hand, he/she shall prepare the teaching support material needed to comply with its teaching responsibility, administer the human and fiscal resources of the Institute, supervise the contracted personnel, and perform any other function entrusted by the Mayor. The Executive Director shall have as goal the eventual accreditation of the Institute by the General Education Council and the Council on Higher Education.

The Executive Director shall annually submit a report on the achievements of the Institute to the Mayor of San Juan, the Legislature and the Governor of Puerto Rico.

#### Section 6.- Board of Education of San Juan

The Institute shall answer to the Board of Education of San Juan created through Ordinance Number 12, 2003-2004 Series.

#### Section 7.- Donations

The Executive Director of the Institute is hereby empowered to accept donations or any other type of aid, either in cash or in kind, in order to extend and promote the development of the services to be offered by the Institute. The amounts thus received, whether from natural or juridical persons, shall be exclusively used to attain the purposes of this Act and shall be covered into the Special Fund to be created.

#### Section 8.- Special Fund

The Municipality of San Juan is hereby authorized to create a special fund separate from any other funds or accounts of said municipality. In addition, any revenues originating from donations, charges for services, or teaching materials and other items consigned through special legislation shall be covered into said Fund. The money deposited in the fund shall be used solely for the purposes of this Act. The matching of the moneys of the Fund with any other resources originating from the municipality or federal agencies or the private sector is hereby authorized.

#### Section 9.- Budget Appropriations

The sum of seven hundred and fifty thousand (750,000) dollars from unencumbered funds of the Commonwealth Treasury are appropriated recurrently, for two consecutive years, to defray the operating costs of the Institute and to comply with the purposes of this Act.

#### Section 10.- This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2005.

## CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 11 (S.B. 113) of the 1<sup>st</sup> Session of the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislature of Puerto Rico:

**AN ACT** to create the Bilingual Citizen Education and Development Institute of the Capital City of Puerto Rico, attached to the Municipality of San Juan; to establish its organization, operation, and duties,

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 1<sup>st</sup> of February of 2006.

Francisco J. Domenech  
Director