

(S. B. 61)

(No. 45)

(Approved August 11, 2005)

AN ACT

To amend Section 17 of Act No. 133 of July 1, 1975, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rico Forest Act,” to increase the penalties for any violations of the provisions of said Act or its regulations.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

It is well known that our environment is continuously affected by factors such as the abusive exploitation of our natural resources, the contamination caused by technological advances, the unmeasured falling of trees, and the gradual extinction of our forests.

The scientific world has called the consequences of these factors the “greenhouse effect” and the same not only affects Puerto Rico, but the entire planet.

In our code of laws, there are legislative measures directed to protect our environment, particularly our trees. Act No. 133 of July 1, 1975, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rico Forest Act,” prohibits unnecessary or unauthorized deforestation. Likewise, it imposes penalties on any person who violates the provisions of the law or its regulations.

However, taking into account the ecological situation and the benefit forestation provides to our environment, it is necessary to take measures to help to avoid that the environment continues to be affected by persons who do not value the importance of protecting it.

For this reason, the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico deems it necessary to impose more severe penalties, which discourage unnecessary, unmeasured or unauthorized deforestation.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.- Section 17 of Act No. 133 of July 1, 1975, as amended, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Section 17.- Penal Sanctions

Any violation to any provision of this Act or its regulations shall constitute a misdemeanor and upon conviction the accused shall be punished with a fine of not less than five (500) hundred dollars nor more than one thousand (1,000) dollars, or imprisonment for a term of not less than five days nor more than ninety (90) days, or both penalties at the discretion of the court.

The violation of a resolution, decision, or order issued by the Secretary of Natural and Environmental Resources under this Act or its regulations, by any natural or juridical person shall also constitute a misdemeanor punishable by the penalties stated above.

Section 2.- This Act shall take effect immediately after its approval.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 45 (S.B. 61) of the 1st Session of the 14th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to amend Section 17 of Act No. 133 of July 1, 1975, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rico Forest Act,” to increase the penalties for any violations of the provisions of said Act or its regulations,

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 7th of October of 2005.

Francisco J. Domenech
Director