

(H.B. 667)

(No. 73)

(Approved August 25, 2005)

AN ACT

To add new subsections (2) and (3), renumber subsections (2) and (3) as subsection (4) and (5) of Section 5 of Act No. 131 of May 16, 2003, known as the “Act to Authorize the Government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to Execute Contracts with Profit and Nonprofit Community, Faith Based, and other Secular Organizations, and to Appropriate Funds to Provide Social and Economic Assistance,” in order to clarify their purposes and goals and broaden the designation of the agencies responsible for divulging the significance of said law as well as the duty to establish a Protocol to disseminate information, educate and provide orientation about the resources and assistance available for community and faith based groups and organizations that seek social and economic assistance.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Since the approval of Act No. 131 of May 16, 2003, which allows faith based groups and organizations to compete so as to obtain government funds and execute contracts with the government just like any other secular organization, there have been few attempts by these faith based organizations to execute contracts with the government and thus obtain social and economic assistance. This is due, among other reasons, to the lack of knowledge of these groups and organizations about said law. In spite of the fact that the purpose of this Act is to provide funds and assistance under equal conditions to organizations and groups that help the needy and the

forsaken, faith based groups consider themselves as being at a disadvantage when seeking support for their causes. We must remember that said funds are not to be used for sectarian or proselytizing works but to help our needy fellow beings.

In order to fulfill the purposes of Act No. 131, *supra*, this Legislature believes it is necessary that the government agencies develop a mechanism to provide orientation and information on the resources and the assistance available pursuant to this Act. Furthermore, the agencies should establish a Protocol to disseminate information, educate and provide orientation about the resources and assistance available for community and faith based groups and organizations that seek social and economic assistance.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.-A new subsection (2) is hereby added to Section 5 of Act No. 131 of May 16, 2003, to read as follows:

“Section 5.-Rights of Assistance Beneficiaries

(1) In General

...

(2) All Government Agencies are hereby directed to establish a Protocol to disseminate information, educate and provide orientation about the resources and assistance available, pursuant to subsections (1) and (2) of Section 1, to every community and faith based group and organization that seek social and economic assistance. Said Protocol shall contain, without this being construed as a limitation, a set of Regulations to be followed for soliciting the funds for providing social and economic assistance, a program for disclosing information on the funds available for each fiscal year which shall include the

design of an informative flier to be accessible to the public in every government agency and as a page in the Internet. It shall also contain all the information to provide general education and orientation related to the funds and how to apply for them. Every agency shall have a term of sixty (60) days as of the date of approval of this Act to establish its protocol.”

Section 2.-A new subsection (3) is hereby added to Section 5 of Act No. 131 of May 16, 2003, to read as follows:

“(3) All Government Agencies are hereby directed to make available to the public in a visible place a copy of this Act.”

Section 3.-Subsections (2) and (3) of Section 5 of Act No. 131 of May 16, 2003, are hereby renumbered as subsections (4) and (5).

Section 4.-This Act shall take effect sixty (60) days after its approval.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 73 (H.B. 667) of the 1st Session of the 15th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to add new subsections (2) and (3), renumber subsections (2) and (3) as subsection (4) and (5) of Section 5 of Act No. 131 of May 16, 2003, known as the “Act to Authorize the Government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to Execute Contracts with Profit and Nonprofit Community, Faith Based, and other Secular Organizations, and to Appropriate Funds to Provide Social and Economic Assistance,” in order to clarify their purposes and goals and broaden the designation of the agencies responsible for divulging the significance of said law as well as the duty to establish a Protocol to disseminate information, educate and provide orientation about the resources and assistance available for community and faith based groups and organizations that seek social and economic assistance,

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 17th of January of 2006.

Francisco J. Domenech
Director

