

(H.B. 32)

(No. 85)

(Approved August 26, 2005)

AN ACT

To amend Sections 1, 6 and 7 and add subsections (24), (25) and (26) to Section 7; renumber subsection (24) as subsection (27) in Section 7; repeal Sections 2, 3 and 4 and renumber Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 13 as Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of Act No. 34 of July 13, 1978, as amended, known as the “Youth Affairs Advisory Council Act,” in order to eliminate the “Advisory Council” created in said Act; to add functions and duties to the Office of Youth Affairs and for other purposes.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Act No. 34 of July 13, 1978, as amended, known as the “Youth Affairs Advisory Council Act,” was created for the general purpose of finding alternatives to face youth-related problems in a coordinated and integral manner. The Advisory Council was supposed to coordinate with various agencies the design and development of projects and programs to benefit the young. In harmony with this purpose it would recommend systems and methods for coordinating and implementing youth-related legislation and to simplify administrative practices so as to reduce the cost for administering the programs. Said purpose would require that special attention be given to the development, conditions and controls involved in the administration of the programs.

This Council was supposed to provide technical help to the Executive and the Legislative Branches in the revision and programmatic evaluation of youth-related matters. It would also motivate the participation of our youth in solving their problems and would provide a forum for discussing, analyzing and evaluating youth programs.

Although the reasons for approving this Act are praiseworthy, it is not the less true that historically these Boards have tended to be inoperable. Although it is true that the Office created under this same law has spearheaded the defense and creation of rights for our youth, its achievements have at times been limited because of said Board or Advisory Council.

It is well known by all that this type of Board or Council, constituted by certain Heads of Agencies, becomes impractical and bureaucratic. This is so because for the Office to be able to execute public policy it must wait until said Heads are able to meet and establish or create such public policy. The coordination of interagency meetings is a very difficult task, a situation which causes delays in providing the services the young must receive as soon as possible. It is a known fact that the Heads of Agencies are busy persons and so to charge them with more responsibilities becomes an onerous burden that may not allow them to properly serve in their respective fields.

The present Legislature of Puerto Rico is motivated to introduce this legislation so as to turn the Office of Youth Affairs into a more agile and efficient entity and confer upon the Office and the person of its Executive Director several of the functions and powers of the Council so that it may achieve and capably fulfill the primary purposes for which the legislation was originally introduced.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.-Section 1 of Act No. 34 of July 13, 1978, as amended, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Section 1.-Title

This Act shall be known as the “Office of Youth Affairs Act.”

Section 2.-Sections 2, 3 and 4 of Act No. 34 of July 13, 1978, as amended, are hereby repealed.

Section 3.-Section 5 of Act No. 34 of July 13, 1978, as amended, is hereby renumbered as Section 2.

Section 4.-Section 6 of Act No. 34 of July 13, 1978, as amended, is hereby amended and renumbered as Section 3 to read as follows:

“Section 3.-Appointment of Executive Director

The Governor, with the prior advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint and fix the salary of the Executive Director who shall hold office at the will of the nominating authority.

The Executive Director shall be responsible for exercising the functions and duties assigned in this chapter.”

Section 5.-Subsection (3) is hereby amended and subsections 24, 25, and 26 added to Section 7; subsection (24) is hereby renumbered as subsection (27) of Section 7; said Section 7 is renumbered as Section 4 of Act No. 34 of July 13, 1978, as amended, to read as follows:

“Section 4.-Functions and duties of the Office

The Office shall have the following functions and duties:

(1)

(2)

(3) To examine the government programs to determine their impact and effectiveness in handling and solving the problems of the young

and recommend the corresponding corrective actions. It shall establish a center for collecting, studying, evaluating, analyzing and divulging statistical data regarding the various assistance, education and orientation programs and those of any other nature administered by government agencies. In compliance with the duties provided in this subsection, the Office shall give priority attention to those government programs directed to preparing and training Puerto Rican youth as a first step towards their full integration into the labor force. In that regard the Office shall prepare a statistical chart and conduct a study that would gather those government offerings that allow the young people of Puerto Rico to make a successful transition into the labor force. The results of the efforts set forth in this subsection shall be included in an annual report which the Office must submit to the Legislature.

(4) To develop activities, participate in forums and establish mechanisms and procedures to guarantee the rights of the young and ensure their full participation in the way of life of our people.

(5) To promote knowledge and a better understanding of the problems of our young and conduct information and orientation activities directed to preparing the young in matters of leadership, civic awareness, parliamentary procedures, oratory and others, so they may develop positive attitudes towards themselves, their families and their communities.

(6) To establish mechanisms to improve the coordination of programs and projects of the various government agencies pertaining to the youth of Puerto Rico and to submit recommendations to the agencies that develop youth related programs.

(7) ...

(9) To encourage the establishment and participation of the young in youth organizations.

(10) ...

(24) To draft and adopt a plan setting forth the standards to coordinate and guide government organizations concerning the development and implementation of youth related programs and projects.

(25) To recommend programs and projects through the development and execution of affirmative action plans to ensure the integral implementation of the public policy related to the young.

(26) To establish systems and procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of the government programs for solving the problems and meeting the needs of the young.

(27) To draft and implement through diverse activities and the communications media, an orientation and consciousness-raising plan on traffic safety with special emphasis on the dangers of drag racing, speed contests and/or motor vehicle races prohibited in the public roads of Puerto Rico, known also as 'la fiebre,' as well as the use of four track vehicles and the consequences of driving motor vehicles under the influence of drugs or intoxicating or controlled substances.”

Section 6.-Sections 8, 9 and 13 are hereby renumbered as Sections 5, 6 and 7 of Act No. 34 of July 13, 1978, as amended.

Section 7.-This Act shall take effect immediately after its approval.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 85 (H.B. 32) of the 1st Session of the 15th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to amend Sections 1, 6 and 7 and add subsections (24), (25) and (26) to Section 7; renumber subsection (24) as subsection (27) in Section 7; repeal Sections 2, 3 and 4 and renumber Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 13 as Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of Act No. 34 of July 13, 1978, as amended, known as the “Youth Affairs Advisory Council Act,” in order to eliminate the “Advisory Council” created in said Act; to add functions and duties to the Office of Youth Affairs and for other purposes,

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 24th of January of 2006.

Francisco J. Domenech
Director