

(H. B. 184)

(No. 60)

(Approved February 14, 2006)

AN ACT

To add a Section 9 to Act No. 33 of June 27, 1985, as amended, known as an “Act to Establish Minimum Procedural Requirements for the Suspension of Essential Public Services” to establish and guarantee that no telecommunications company that provides telephone service to a natural or juridical person may eliminate access to the 9-1-1 Emergency System during the partial suspension of its services to a client for failure to pay, and to require the Puerto Rico Telecommunications Regulatory Board to harmonize the regulations on Suspension of Telecommunications and Cable Television Service in order to ensure faithful compliance with this Act.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

The 9-1-1 Emergency System is an indispensable tool to effectively manage emergencies that may occur in homes as well as in public establishments. As an example, and a reality we have witnessed, is when we see persons of scarce financial resources whose telephone service has been suspended for failure to pay, are deprived of the use of the 9-1-1 System when their home is being consumed by flames or to protect their lives in other situations.

The present technology allows for the necessary adjustments to be made to guarantee that clients who are overdue have access to the 9-1-1 System as a mechanism to avoid unfortunate events. This legislation is in consonance with the purposes of Act No. 33 of June 27, 1985, as amended, known as the “Act to Establish Minimum Procedural Requirements for the

Suspension of Essential Public Services.” As a matter of fact, Act No. 218 of September 12, 1996 established that the telecommunications companies subject to supervision by the Telecommunications Regulatory Board shall comply with abovementioned Act No. 33.

In this sense, it is proper to amend said legislation in order to protect the citizenry and to grant them the adequate mechanisms to report emergencies, by prohibiting the elimination of access to the 9-1-1 Emergency System during the suspension of services for failure to pay. Likewise, the Puerto Rico Telecommunications Regulatory Board is required to harmonize the regulations on the Suspension of Telecommunications and Cable Television Service in order to ensure faithful compliance with this Act.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.- A new Section 9 is hereby added to Act No. 33 of June 27, 1985, as amended, known as the “Act to Establish Minimum Procedural Requirements for the Suspension of Essential Public Services,” to read as follows:

“Section 9.- 9-1-1 Access Guarantee

No telecommunications company that provides telephone service to a natural or juridical person may eliminate access to the 9-1-1 Emergency System during the partial suspension of its services to a client for failure to pay.”

Section 2.- Provided, that the Puerto Rico Telecommunications Regulatory Board shall harmonize the regulations on the Suspension of Telecommunications and Cable Television Service in order to ensure faithful compliance with this Act.

Section 3.- This Act shall take effect immediately after its approval.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 60 (H.B. 184) of the 3rd Session of the 15th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to add a Section 9 to Act No. 33 of June 27, 1985, as amended, known as an “Act to Establish Minimum Procedural Requirements for the Suspension of Essential Public Services” to establish and guarantee that no telecommunications company that provides telephone service to a natural or juridical person may eliminate access to the 9-1-1 Emergency System during the partial suspension of its services to a client for failure to pay, and to require the Puerto Rico Telecommunications Regulatory Board to harmonize the regulations on Suspension of Telecommunications and Cable Television Service in order to ensure faithful compliance with this Act,

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 8th of September of 2006.

Francisco J. Domenech
Director