

(S. B. 532)

(No. 140)

(Approved August 2, 2006)

AN ACT

To amend Sections 2 and 3 of Act No. 9 of May 3, 1993, known as the “Act to establish the Thurgood Marshall Award, to regulate its granting and appropriate funds for such purposes,” in order for the Civil Rights Commission to be the grantor of the Thurgood Marshall Award and to establish that the funds for the granting of the Award shall originate from the budget of the Office of Legislative Services, attached to the Legislature.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

On 1993, this Legislature approved Act No. 9, *supra*, which created the Thurgood Marshall Award, to commemorate the late Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, Hon. Thurgood Marshall. Thurgood Marshall, before his judicial appointment, was an attorney devoted to the defense of the civil rights of the citizens, particularly those of Black citizens. In the 1950s, he successfully argued Brown v. Board of Education, 347 US 483 (1954), which set the most important judicial precedent in the fight against racial segregation. In 1967, he became the first member of his race exalted to the United States Supreme Court. Justice Thurgood Marshall continued his course in favor of the civil rights of all the citizens of the United States from his bench in the highest Federal Court.

Civil rights and the fight to maintain, protect and expand the same must be the purpose that guides the practice of every jurist.

This Legislature deems it prudent to transfer the responsibility of bestowing this Award to the Civil Rights Commission of Puerto Rico. The main responsibility of this entity is to educate the people as to the meaning of the fundamental rights of the people and the means to respect, protect, and exalt the same. The Civil Rights Commission is the most adequate entity to bestow this Award, since its main mission is in harmony with the *raison d'être* of the Award. However, the Legislature recognizes that for the past years, the Department of Justice took the steps to comply with Act No. 9, *supra*, in order to grant this distinction to students. To such effects, it promulgated Regulation No. 6477 of February 13, 2002, which establishes the standards that shall govern all matters concerning the granting of the Award. Pursuant to the regulations created, through a communication issued on August 1, 2005, the Department of Justice circulated the referred regulations through Law Schools and notified them that the deadline to submit candidates would be April 30 of each year. The Department of Justice has requested the collaboration of each faculty, since their contribution is essential for the agency to be able to choose the award-winners.

This Award was established in memory of the jurist Thurgood Marshall, who dedicated his talent to the cause of equality and civil rights. It is our intention to honor the most outstanding civil rights and individual liberties students of the Law Schools in Puerto Rico, and to keep alive the memory and tradition of Hon. Thurgood Marshall and his fight for civil rights.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.- Section 2 of Act No. 9 of May 3, 1993, is hereby amended, to read as follows:

“Section 2.- The Civil Rights Commission shall grant said award, which consists of one thousand (\$1,000) dollars in cash, and shall provide, through regulations, on all matters concerning its granting.”

Section 2.- Section 3 of Act No. 9 of May 3, 1993, is hereby amended, to read as follows:

“Section 3.- The necessary funds to render effective the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the funds appropriated to the General Budget of Expenses of the Government of Puerto Rico, under the item of the budget appropriated to the Office of Legislative Services, attached to the Legislature of Puerto Rico.”

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. 140 (S.B. 532) of the 3rd Session of the 15th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to amend Sections 2 and 3 of Act No. 9 of May 3, 1993, known as the “Act to establish the Thurgood Marshall Award, to regulate its granting and appropriate funds for such purposes,” in order for the Civil Rights Commission to be the grantor of the Thurgood Marshall Award and to establish that the funds for the granting of the Award shall originate from the budget of the Office of Legislative Services, attached to the Legislature,

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 2nd of November of 2006.

Francisco J. Domenech
Director