

(H. B. 829)
(Reconsidered)

(No. 166)

(Approved August 30, 2006)

AN ACT

To amend subsection E Fifth of Section 4 of Act No. 13 of October 2, 1980, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rican Veterans’ Bill of Rights,” to clarify its purposes and scope, and to disclose the meaning of said Act to the agencies concerned.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Through the approval of Act No. 13 of October 2, 1980, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rican Veteran’s Bill of Rights,” the benefits and rights of veterans, which were scattered up to that time, were solidly established. In addition to the rights that were scattered, said Act granted additional benefits. Among those benefits are those provided in Section 4, subsection E (5) of this Act, supra, which sets forth the duty of the offices and dependencies of the Government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to issue, free of cost, to all veterans, surviving spouse of veterans and their minor children, any certificate needed for official use and to claim any right. Said Section empowers the Puerto Rico Veteran’s Advocate Office to regulate the manner in which to claim the exemption. Although these regulations were approved on June 15, 1984, we have found that both the agencies and the veterans are unaware of the scope of this benefit. This lack of awareness has caused that veterans claim certificates or documents that are not contemplated by said Act, or that they are issued to other relatives;

also, some employees of government agencies are unaware of this benefit and deny it to veterans when they request the same.

This Legislature furthers this legislation for purposes of making these benefits more available to veterans, and so that they may be issued in a manner that is more prompt and efficient.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.- Section 4, subsection E Fifth of Act No. 13 of October 2, 1980, as amended, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Section 4.- Rights Granted by the Puerto Rican Veteran’s Bill of Rights

The following rights are granted for the benefit of the veteran:

- A. Rights related to work
- B. ...
- E. Rights Regarding Tax Obligations ...
 - “First: ...
 - “Second: ...
 - “Third: ...
 - “Fourth: ...
 - “Fifth : Certificates issued by government dependencies.

“The offices or dependencies of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Government and the municipal governments, such as: courts, registries, bureaus and others of the same or similar nature, shall issue free of payment of fees to every veteran, veteran widow and minor children, any certificate needed for official use and claim of any right.

The Puerto Rico Veteran’s Advocate Office shall approve regulations to establish the manner in which the

exemption shall be claimed. Once approved, these regulations shall be available in all agencies, offices and dependencies that issue such certificates.

The different government agencies, offices and dependencies are hereby directed to place in areas visible to the public a sign stating that certificates issued to every veteran, veteran widow and minor children who comply with the requirements of the regulations shall be free of charge.”

Section 2.-Twelve (12) months after the approval of this Act, the Veteran’s Advocate Office shall be bound to submit a report to the Legislature listing the steps taken to enforce compliance with this Act which shall include a statement regarding those government agencies, offices and dependencies that as of the deadline for submitting said report have not submitted a certificate attesting compliance with the placement of the sign that is required by this Act. Subsequently, the Veteran’s Advocate Office shall submit a report to update this information to the Legislature on or before June 30 of each year.

Section 3.- This Act shall take effect one hundred eighty (180) days after its approval.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 166 (H.B. 829) (Reconsidered) of the 4th Session of the 15th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to amend subsection E Fifth of Section 4 of Act No. 13 of October 2, 1980, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rican Veterans’ Bill of Rights,” to clarify its purposes and scope, and to disclose the meaning of said Act to the agencies concerned,

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

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

Francisco J. Domenech
Director