

(H. B. 1639)

**(No. 241)**

(Approved November 10, 2006)

## **AN ACT**

To amend Section 12 of Act No. 43 of May 14, 1932, as amended, in order to increase the penalties for unauthorized practice of law, and other purposes.

### **STATEMENT OF MOTIVES**

Section 12 of Act No. 43 of May 14, 1932, as amended, establishes the penalties for persons who, without having been duly admitted or licensed to practice law, or who during the suspension of such license practice as a person qualified therefor, or who announce themselves as such or try to lead others to believe that they are a practicing attorney. Persons who violate this statute may be found guilty of a misdemeanor, and the penalties to be imposed would be a fine of one hundred (100) dollars, imprisonment for a period of not less than two (2) months or both penalties, at the discretion of the court. These penalties were established in 1932, and have not been revised since then. With the approval of this Act, the penalties shall be increased to a fine of up to five thousand (5,000) dollars, or imprisonment for not more than six (6) months, or both penalties.

In the society in which we live today, the amount of one hundred (100) dollars could be a laughing matter as a dissuasive means for those who believe that the result of their crime has greater value than incurring false representation and affecting the image of those professionals who are entitled by law to defend and/or represent our citizens and the State before our courts and in legal matters. For such reasons, this Legislature grants greater discretion to the Judge to increase the

penalty of a fine for violations to this Section up to a maximum amount of five thousand (5,000) dollars.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:**

Section 1.- Section 12 of Act No. 43 of May 14, 1932, as amended, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Section 12.-Penalty for unauthorized practice of law

Every person who, without having been duly admitted or licensed to practice the profession as provided in Sections 1 through 13 of this Act, or who during the suspension of such license practices as a person qualified therefor, or who announces himself as such, or who tries to lead others to believe that he is a practicing attorney, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not less than five thousand (5,000) dollars, or imprisonment for not more than six (6) months, or both penalties.”

Section 2.- This Act shall take effect immediately after its approval.

## CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 241 (H.B. 1639) of the 4<sup>th</sup> Session of the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislature of Puerto Rico:

**AN ACT** to amend Section 12 of Act No. 43 of May 14, 1932, as amended, in order to increase the penalties for unauthorized practice of law, and other purposes,

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 13<sup>th</sup> of February of 2007.

Francisco J. Domenech  
Director