

(S.B. 1021)

(No. 247)

(Approved November 14, 2006)

AN ACT

To amend Section 3 and subsection (c) of Section 9 of Act No. 2 of September 27, 1985, as amended, known as the "Office of the Disabled Persons Investigating Official Act," in order to establish as public policy of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico the integration of the persons with disabilities into environmental conservation, education and preservation programs.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Act No. 416 of September 22, 2004 established the public policy related to the protection of the environment and the natural resources in Puerto Rico. The Government of Puerto Rico acknowledged as a legitimate objective to encourage Puerto Rican society to foster a sound environment. At the same time it stressed the responsibility we all share as a people to contribute to the conservation and improvement of the environment.

The public policy provided in the aforementioned Act No. 416 is consonant with the philosophical concept set forth in Act No. 238 of August 31, 2004, known as the "Bill of Rights of Persons with Disabilities," henceforth "the Bill of Rights." This particularly established the responsibility of the Government for establishing the proper conditions that would guarantee all persons with disabilities the enjoyment of a full life and of their natural, human and legal rights, free from discrimination and barriers.

The Bill of Rights declared as public policy the duty of integrating the persons with disabilities into the rendering of services in all agencies and instrumentalities of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Such integration fosters the possibility for those people to develop and use efficiently their abilities and talents. Furthermore, it allows for the maximum development of their capabilities, an essential element to guarantee that their rights, benefits, responsibilities and privileges be granted under the same conditions granted to those persons who do not suffer from any physical, mental or sensorial disability.

Through the present Act, this Legislature intends to incorporate the environmental public policy to achieve improvements in the quality of life of the persons with disabilities. Likewise, the Office of the Disabled Persons Investigating Official shall promote the creation and development of programs directed to generate consciousness about the protection of the environment, integrate persons with disabilities into the community as well as encourage their participation in environmental conservation, education and restoration activities.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.-Section 3 of Act No. 2 of September 27, 1985, as amended, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Section 3.-Creation of the Office of the Disabled Persons Investigating Official.-

The Office of the Disabled Person Investigating Official is hereby created as a juridical entity, independent and separate from any other public agency or entity and in addition to other functions provided in this Act, it shall have be responsible for serving as a coordinating instrument to attend to and make feasible the solution of the problems, needs and claims of

disabled persons in the areas of education, health, employment and free business or entrepreneurial activity, civil and political rights, social, labor and tax legislation, housing, transportation, recreation and culture, among others. It shall likewise be responsible for establishing and executing a program for the assistance, orientation and counseling of disabled persons. It shall also promote the integration of the persons with physical, mental or sensory disabilities into environmental conservation, education and preservation programs to be instituted at the agencies and instrumentalities of the Government of Puerto Rico.”

Section 2.-Subsection (c) of Section 9 of Act No. 2 of September 27, 1985, as amended, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Section 9.-Functions and Responsibilities of the Office of the Investigating Official.-

The Office, in addition to the provisions included in this Act, or in the laws or programs whose administration and implementation are delegated thereto, shall have the following functions and responsibilities:

(a) ...

(c) Promote the creation and development of programs to integrate disabled persons into the community and encourage their participation in educational, social, cultural, recreational and any other activities relative to the restoration, conservation and education on the environment and any others that will positively contribute to their rehabilitation and development.

...”

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. 247 (S.B. 1021) of the 4th Session of the 15th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to amend Section 3 and subsection (c) of Section 9 of Act No. 2 of September 27, 1985, as amended, known as the "'Office of the Disabled Persons Investigating Official Act," in order to establish as public policy of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico the integration of the persons with disabilities into environmental conservation, education and preservation programs,

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 13th of February of 2007.

Francisco J. Domenech
Director