

(S. B. 423)
(Reconsidered)

(No. 261)

(Approved December 8, 2006)

AN ACT

To amend subsection (b) of Section 6 of Act No. 53 of June 10, 1996, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rico Police Act of 1996,” in order to increase to four the monthly payments of the gross salary to be granted to the surviving spouse or to the dependents of the members of the Puerto Rico Police Corps, or its civilian personnel who die in the performance of their duties, or as a consequence thereof.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Crime and the fear of being a victim of crime are matters that greatly trouble our citizens, and thus limit their capacity for pursuing their daily duties, while at the same time curtailing their pursuit of individual and collective peace which we as a people should enjoy. To such effects, the Government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico believes it indispensable to strengthen the system of justice.

Act No. 53 of June 10, 1996, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rico Police Act of 1996,” created a civil public law and order body whose obligation was to protect persons and property, to maintain and conserve the public order, to observe and procure the protection of the civil rights of the citizens and to prevent, discover, investigate and persecute delinquency. The Puerto Rico Police Corps performs a most important function in the fight against crime and through its efforts makes it possible for all Puerto Ricans to fully enjoy their lives.

The members of the Police Corps, in their line of duty, put their safety and their lives at high risk. Act No. 127 of June 27, 1958, as amended, provides for the pensions for the death of the members of the Corps, among others, while in the performance of their duties. However, the process for adjudicating pensions is slow and lengthy and therefore the beneficiaries do not receive the compensation immediately.

For those effects it is meritorious to grant the beneficiaries of these men and women who lose their lives while in the performance of their functions, an amount corresponding to four monthly payments of the gross salary the Police officer was earning at the time of his/her death so that the beneficiaries may be able to meet their needs.

This Legislature believes it necessary to approve this Act which provides immediate compensation to the dependents of these public servants who have died in the line of duty, in benefit of all the People of Puerto Rico.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.-Subsection (b) of Section 6 of Act No. 53 of June 10, 1996, as amended, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“(a) ...

(b) The Superintendent shall procure and disburse to the surviving spouse, or in his/her absence, to the dependents of the police officer who has died in the performance of his/her duties, an amount corresponding to four (4) monthly payments of the gross salary earned by the latter to cover urgent family needs. This payment shall be charged to the operating expenses budget of the Puerto Rico Police no later than two (2) working days after the death of the member of the Force. The processing of this benefit shall be made regardless of any other compensation or benefit to which the spouse or the dependents of these public servants are entitled.”

...”

Section 2.-This Act shall take effect July 1, 2006.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 261 (S.B. 423) (Reconsidered) of the 4th Session of the 15th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to amend subsection (b) of Section 6 of Act No. 53 of June 10, 1996, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rico Police Act of 1996,” in order to increase to four the monthly payments of the gross salary to be granted to the surviving spouse or to the dependents of the members of the Puerto Rico Police Corps, or its civilian personnel who die in the performance of their duties, or as a consequence thereof,

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 26th of February of 2007.

Francisco J. Domenech
Director