

(S. B. 707)

**(No. 27-2023)**

(Approved January 13, 2023)

**AN ACT**

To add new subsections (c), (d), (e), and (f) to, and renumber current subsections (c) and (d) as (g) and (h) in Section 27 of Act No. 355-1999, as amended, known as the “Uniform Signs and Advertisement Act of Puerto Rico of 1999,” to authorize the Commissioner of the Puerto Rico Police Bureau to broadcast other emergency alerts; and for other related purposes.

**STATEMENT OF MOTIVES**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly took several Public Safety initiatives in Puerto Rico. One of these initiatives was Act No. 11-2015, which amended Act No. 355-1999, as amended, known as the “Uniform Signs and Advertisement Act of Puerto Rico of 1999,” to incorporate the definition of the term the “Digital Billboards” and include provisions that would enable the Puerto Rico Police to use said digital billboards to broadcast public service announcements and alerts. This Act was a forward-looking step in the search for the Police most wanted criminals. Said Act certainly provided the highest-ranking police officers with the necessary tools to make use of digital media seen by all to broadcast pertinent and relevant information, thus enabling citizens to collaborate with the Police and aiding in removing from the streets those who break the rules and engage in conducts that we, as a society, repudiate.

In addition, Act No. 11-2015 introduced alerts akin to the Amber Alert, which establishes the protocols for the broadcasting through mass media and technological devices, of alerts regarding missing persons under the age of eighteen (18). The amendment made under Act No. 11-2015 enables us to include other alerts among those that the Puerto Rico Police can request to be broadcasted on digital billboards; to wit, the Silver Alert, the Mayra Elías Alert, the PINK Alert, and the Ashanti Alert.

The Silver Alert was established in Puerto Rico in 2009 by means of Act No. 132-2009, which established a protocol for missing persons who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or dementia. Likewise, the Mayra Elías Alert was established by means of Act No. 187-2016 for the purpose of disseminating information regarding the whereabouts of the suspect of a motor vehicle accident if he has fled the scene and caused serious bodily injury to the victim or the victim's death. In addition, the PINK Alert was recently established by means of Act No. 149-2019. This type of alert is activated when the disappearance of a woman over the age of eighteen (18) is reported. The alert was first activated in Puerto Rico when the disappearance of Keishla Ortiz was reported.

Lastly, the Ashanti Alert is activated in the event of the disappearance of a person over eighteen (18) years of age who suffers from a proven mental or physical disability; or when a person goes missing under circumstances that indicate that the physical safety of the missing adult may be endangered; or if the disappearance of the missing adult may not have been voluntary, which includes kidnapping.

***BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF PUERTO RICO:***

Section 1.— New subsections (c), (d), (e), and (f) are hereby added to, and current subsections (c) and (d) are hereby renumbered as (g) and (h) in, Section 27 of Act No. 355-1999, as amended, known as the “Uniform Signs and Advertisement Act of Puerto Rico of 1999” to read as follows:

“Section 27. – Public Service

Any person engaged in the advertisement installation business shall set aside a free space therein to display public service announcements. Any person who owns between one (1) and thirty (30) advertising spaces shall leave one (1) space available for public service announcements. Any person who owns between thirty-one (31) and one hundred (100) advertising spaces shall leave two (2) spaces available for public service announcements. Any person who owns between one hundred and one (101) and one hundred and fifty (150) advertising spaces shall leave three (3) spaces available for public service announcements. Any person who owns between one hundred and fifty-one (151) and two hundred (200) advertising spaces shall leave four (4) spaces available for public service announcements. Any person who owns two hundred (200) advertising spaces or more shall leave five (5) spaces available for public service announcements.

Any person engaged in the advertisement installation business shall annually certify to the Permit Management Office the number of advertising spaces available, as well as the number of spaces set aside for public service announcements.

At the request of the Puerto Rico Police, those persons who own digital billboards shall provide a specific space, identified and selected by the Puerto Rico Police, to display announcements. It shall be duty of the Commissioner of the Police Bureau to provide the artwork to be used for the dissemination of the information in the cases stated herein below:

- a) Composite sketches and information regarding the Police most wanted criminals;
- b) Amber Alert;
- c) Silver Alert;
- d) Mayra Elías Alert;

- e) PINK Alert;
- f) Ashanti Alert;
- g) Emergency alerts;
- h) Police information and contact number.

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## Section 2. – Effectiveness

This Act shall take effect upon its approval.