

(H. B. 2073)

(No. 30-2015)

(Approved March 17, 2015)

## AN ACT

To designate the Second Unit School of the Río Jueyes Ward of the Municipality of Coamo as the “Román Colón-Correa School.”

### STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

The history of peoples and communities is written mainly through the actions and work of men and women who are aware and concerned about the needs of those around them. These are honest, visionary, and dynamic men and women interested, above all, in the common good, even at the expense of their own wellbeing. Leaders like this, in many fields, have enriched Puerto Rican history with their acts and the commitment they showed.

Therefore, we must recognize that social development is achieved thanks to the efforts of people who, within the limitations of their lives’ circumstances, rise up and work for the welfare of others and, thus, that of their own communities. These are humble people with principles and values who contribute their ideas, creativity, time, effort, and determination to make the world around them better every day and to help improve housing, healthcare, recreation, safety, and living conditions for their peers, neighbors, and friends.

At the Río Jueyes Ward of the Municipality of Coamo, there have always been people like this. One of them was *Don* Mariano Colón-Luna, who worked zealously for the development and welfare of this corner of our beloved town. As a community leader and representative of this community in our municipality, along with others who wanted to emulate him, *Don* Mariano achieved housing development through the first distribution of parcels of land and the first low-income self-help and mutual

aid project, which provided a safe home for many families who previously lived in houses made of straw, wood, and other perishable materials. This accomplishment stands out and is still greatly appreciated, among many others *Don* Mariano Colón obtained for his community during all the years he devoted heart and soul to this, his life's mission. To continue with his work after he passed away, he left us one of his sons who, with dedication and a calling for service, carried on his father's example.

We are referring to his son, Román Colón-Correa, born in Villaba, Puerto Rico, on February 29, 1921, from his marriage to *Doña* Rufina Correa-De Jesús. Román was the youngest of his eleven (11) siblings, to wit: Ángela, Basilisa, Andrea, María, Modesto, Timoteo, Eustaquio, Anastasia, Pedro, José, and Florencio (the last two only on his mother's side).

His beginnings, as those of so many others back then, was extremely humble. He only completed the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) grade, which was beyond the average child at the time, for many had to take up different responsibilities to help support their families. However, thankful for the opportunity and the knowledge received, he proved in time that he had made the most of what he learned.

Román, as part of that hardworking generation, toiled away in the sugarcane harvests from the age of 13 to help support his family. In 1945, at 24 years of age, he enlisted in the United States Army. This was right after the end of World War II. He married Ms. María Teresa Zambrana-Díaz that same year and they had five (5) children together: twins Félix and Luis, Josefina, Benjamín, and Carmen.

In order to improve their financial situation, Román left for the United States from 1952 to 1954 to lay train tracks in Ohio for the New York Central Railroad. Given his outstanding job performance, he made it to supervisor within the company. Upon returning to Puerto Rico, he went back to work in the sugarcane industry.

From 1956 to 1957, he worked in construction at Camp Santiago in Salinas, and in 1958, in what was known as “La Cantera,” a quarry that provided stone for building roads, as well as for making tiles in factories located in Caguas.

His concern for the welfare of his community led him to become a community leader in the ward, thus following in the footsteps of his father, *Don* Mariano Colón. He continued to work to improve the living conditions of family, friends, and neighbors in the community, and he achieved, along with a large group of other leaders, the second distribution of parcels of land in that area. This way, the lessons he learned well from the example set at home continued to bear fruit.

His leadership went beyond all this, and he was later elected to Coamo’s Municipal Legislature as a community representative during the terms as mayor of both *Don* Juan Rivera and *Don* Horacio Ortiz. Furthermore, he coached the Río Jueyes baseball team and was part of the Old Timer’s team of the Adam Figueroa League.

After the 1960s, Román focused on his convenience store business. His store was located on the exit from the ward to Santa Isabel, in the area called *parcelas viejas*. Many people were able to purchase food and miscellaneous items with the notes from the account books where Román kept the names of those to whom he generously and trustingly extended credit. He later took charge of a second convenience store located within the parcels of land of the second distribution, which supplied the needs of that area. By that time, his children Taty, Fito, and Guiso had begun helping him with the business, which he managed for thirty-five (35) years. His stores supplied the needs of many families and, in one of them, the post would deliver the mail of all the residents.

For all of the foregoing, and bearing in mind our duty to preserve the contributions of all Puerto Rican men and women whose deeds so warrant, this Legislative Assembly hereby names the Second Unit School of the Río Jueyes Ward of the Municipality of Coamo after Román Colón-Correa, a Puerto Rican man whose effort, leadership, commitment, and outreach to his community stand as a symbol of the best principles and values for which we are known as a people.

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

Section 1.— The Second Unit School of the Río Jueyes Ward of the Municipality of Coamo is hereby designated as “Román Colón-Correa School.”

Section 2.— The Public Structures and Highways Naming Commission of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico shall take the necessary measures to comply with the provisions of this Act without being subject to the provisions of Act No. 99 of June 22, 1961, as amended, known as the “Public Structures and Highways Naming Commission of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Act.”

Section 3.— This Act shall take effect immediately upon approval.

## CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following **Act No. 30-2015 (H. B. 2073)** of the **5<sup>th</sup> Regular Session** of the **17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico**:

**AN ACT** to designate the Second Unit School of the Río Jueyes Ward of the Municipality of Coamo as the “Román Colón-Correa School.”

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, on this 19<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2017.

Orlando Pagán-Ramírez  
Acting Director