



LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO

Office of Legislative Services

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 35 (H.B. 3137) of the 4th Session of the 14th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to authorize the Executive Director of the Office of Youth Affairs, adjoined to the Office of the Governor, to create a program for the granting of loans to young persons for purposes of pursuing technical and vocational studies, or starting their own business; to provide for the setting forth of regulations, norms and procedures for the selection of participants; to appropriate funds,

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 30th of January of 2004. .

Elba Rosa Rodríguez Fuentes
Director

(P.C. 3137)

(No. 35)

(Approved January 3, 2003)

AN ACT

To authorize the Executive Director of the Office of Youth Affairs, adjoined to the Office of the Governor, to create a program for the granting of loans to young persons for purposes of pursuing technical and vocational studies, or starting their own business; to provide for the setting forth of regulations, norms and procedures for the selection of participants; to appropriate funds.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Our society is comprised of a broad sector of young persons with ideals and the desire to succeed. Daily, youth claims participation in all matters that affect us, and offer solutions for the solution of problems that afflict our society. Therefore, the Government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is very interested in effectively channeling the potential of these youths.

Access to education is sometimes limited by the lack of economic resources. The cost of matriculation fees in private universities is too high, and in spite of the benefits provided by federal assistance, these are not enough to cover all the needs of the students. Another difficulty youths face is having a grade point average below that of the requirements of learning institutions in order to be accepted.

Our youth must be given opportunities to train for obtaining employment and starting their own business, according to their education, skills and abilities, which allows them to earn their daily sustenance with dignity and become worthy citizens.

By means of this Act, the Executive Director of the Office of Youth Affairs is empowered to create a program to assist the population of youths that is oftentimes marginated by the high demands of learning institutions, either

economic, or of grade point average. Our youth must be integrated into the workforce. Idleness drives our youth toward delinquency and dependency upon social assistance, and undermines their desire of self-improvement. Addressing the needs of our youth is an investment in a better future.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.- The Executive Director of the Office of Youth Affairs, adjoined to the Office of the Governor, is hereby authorized to create a program to grant loans to youths for the pursuit of technical and vocational studies, and to start their own business.

Section 2.-The Executive Director of the Office of Youth Affairs shall set forth by means of regulation the norms and procedures that shall govern the granting of loans and scholarships to be granted pursuant to the dispositions in this Act.

Section 3.-All participants must comply with the following minimum requirements in order to be eligible to participate in the Scholarships and Loans Program.

- (a) Must be between the ages of eighteen (18) and twenty-nine (29) at the time of requesting the benefits.
- (b) Must have the aptitudes and aspirations required in order to obtain the benefits and services of the Office of Youth Affairs.
- (c) Must satisfy any other requirement set forth by regulation, and commit to comply with all the rules and norms of said regulation.
- (d) In the selection of participants, there must be no discrimination by reason of race, color, sex, birth, social origin or condition, or due to political or religious beliefs.

Section 4.-The amount of two million (2,000,000) dollars from unassigned State Treasury funds are hereby appropriated to the Office of Youth Affairs for the

granting of loans, acquisition of equipment, personnel recruitment, and other operational expenses in harmony with the purposes of this Act.

Section 5.-The Secretary of the Treasury is hereby authorized to forward the necessary funds up to the amount of two million (2,000,000) dollars, the repayment of which shall be paid with the appropriation of funds set forth in Section 4 of this Act.

Section 6.-The Executive Director of the Office of Youth Affairs shall render an annual report to the Legislature on the activities performed by same, and on the work plan for the following year.

Section 7.-This Act shall take effect immediately after its approval, with the exception of Section 4, which shall take effect July 1, 2003.