

(S. B. 786)

(No. 93-2015)

(Approved June 20, 2015)

AN ACT

To name the fire station of the Municipality of Lares after Juan Ramón Rodríguez-Ortiz in recognition of his work, dedication, and selflessness as a public servant, especially in the Puerto Rico Firefighters Corps.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Don Juan Ramón Rodríguez-Ortiz, better known in his hometown as “Papi Bombero,” was born in Lares on June 12, 1934. He married Blanca Esther Rivera, with whom he had his children Lourdes, María, Juan Ramón, and Ramón. Since sports were his passion, especially softball, he participated in different softball tournaments and leagues both in Lares and other towns. He was also passionate about music and an accomplished trumpet player. He even had the opportunity to play with music legend Felipe “La Voz” Rodríguez in Chicago, Illinois.

Likewise, *Don* Juan Ramón was a U.S. Army veteran of the Korean War. Upon his return home from the war, he worked for the Aqueduct and Sewer Authority while pursuing a college degree in nursing. He later stood out for his work as a nurse, ambulance driver, and especially, as a firefighter. However, what he loved the most was to help the people of Lares living in communities such as San Felipe, Borinquen, and Comercio Street. He even served as Deputy Mayor of Lares under the administration of then-Mayor Emilio Castro-Rodríguez. After having an accident at work, he received a disability pension, but continued visiting the fire station regularly, showing how proud he was of having been a member of this distinguished corps. Thus, he set the ball rolling for the construction of the new and current fire station in Lares. He also pushed for the local firemen to receive new vehicles and

the necessary safety gear, and for their training to be up to date. Juan Ramón always said that being a firefighter was the greatest honor he received in his life. His passion for public service and for helping the needy was always a worthy example for all those who knew him.

Juan Ramón Rodríguez-Ortiz, “Papi Bombero,” died on June 12, 2006, but his legacy and love for the town of Lares remain. Let us remember the deeds of this great public servant and his contribution to the town of Lares, especially to the fire station that will now bear his name. This Legislative Assembly seeks to recognize through this Bill the career of a great human being, family man, firefighter, and leader, for the mark that he left cannot be erased by wind or by water even as time goes by. This Legislative Assembly is pleased to know that one such mark will remain in the building to be named after him; all the others are in the hearts of a people that, today, say “Thank you, *Don Juan!*” On this day, we remember the great deeds that this public servant carried out for many years with pride, dignity, and respect, always displaying exceptional human qualities, abilities, integrity, responsibility, and good judgment.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1. – The fire station of the Municipality of Lares is hereby named after Juan Ramón Rodríguez-Ortiz in recognition of his work, dedication, and selflessness as a public servant.

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

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. 93-2015 (S. B. 786)** of the **5th Regular Session** of the **17th Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico**:

AN ACT to name the fire station of the Municipality of Lares after Juan Ramón Rodríguez-Ortiz in recognition of his work, dedication, and selflessness as a public servant, especially in the Puerto Rico Firefighters Corps.

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, on this 23rd day of January, 2018.

Orlando Pagán-Ramírez
Acting Director