

(H. B. 431)

(No. 104-2018)

(Approved May 30, 2018)

AN ACT

To amend Section 6 of Act No. 33 of June 27, 1985, as amended, known as the “Act to Establish Minimum Procedural Requirements for the Suspension of Essential Public Services,” to provide that public utilities shall make available to subscribers information regarding the operations of the meters and how to interpret the readings thereof, so that subscribers may pay or dispute a bill in an informed manner.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

The purpose of Act No. 33 of June 27, 1985, as amended, known as the “Act to Establish Minimum Procedural Requirements for the Suspension of Essential Public Services,” is to guarantee to subscribers or consumers an adequate opportunity to question the accuracy and source of the charges invoiced, and an adequate notice of the decision to discontinue services for nonpayment, as well as to guarantee an adequate and full disclosure of the established procedure.

This Act applies to the Puerto Rico Water and Sewer Authority and other public utilities established or to be established in the future and the subsidiaries thereof.

Certainly, it affords protection to the customers of said public corporations and utilities.

Subscribers, however, lack the necessary theoretical and practical knowledge to dispute a bill in an informed manner. The purpose of this Act is to require the Puerto Rico Water and Sewer Authority and other public utilities established or to be established in the future and the subsidiaries thereof to make available to subscribers the necessary information to allow them to interpret their bills.

Currently, due to lack of awareness, many subscribers feel helpless before public utilities because they do not know how to verify whether the monthly bills they receive are accurate. It is critical that this information be available to subscribers.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.- Section 6 of Act No. 33 of June 27, 1985, as amended, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Section 6.- Every invoice sent by the instrumentality to the subscriber shall advise him that he has twenty (20) days to pay or to dispute the same, and to request an investigation by the instrumentality without affecting the service in any way. In addition, the instrumentality shall make available to the subscriber information describing the operations of the water meters, how the subscriber may interpret it, and any other pertinent information that allows the subscriber to pay or dispute the bill in an informed manner.

Thus, each corporation shall determine the place in which such information shall be provided, which may be posted on the website thereof.”

Section 2.- This Act shall take effect immediately after its approval.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following **Act No. 104-2018 (H. B. 431)** of the **3rd Regular Session** of the **18th Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico**:

AN ACT to amend Section 6 of Act No. 33 of June 27, 1985, as amended, known as the “Act to Establish Minimum Procedural Requirements for the Suspension of Essential Public Services,” to provide that public utilities shall make available to subscribers information regarding the operations of the meters and how to interpret the readings thereof, so that subscribers may pay or dispute a bill in an informed manner.

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, on this 28th day of March, 2019.

Orlando Pagán-Ramírez
Director