

(S. B. 1948)

(No. 256-2011)

(Approved December 16, 2011)

AN ACT

To add a subsection (16) to Section 6 of Act No. 10 of June 18, 1970, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rico Tourism Company Act,” for the purpose of developing and implementing the Tourist Guide Program, in order to improve the quality of tourist services provided in the Island.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Act No. 10 of June 18, 1970, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rico Tourism Company Act,” created said public corporation with the duties and powers needed to promote, develop, and improve the tourist industry in the Island. The Company, which is attached to the Department of Economic Development and Commerce, contributes to the economic and social development of Puerto Rico, working effectively with the components of the tourist industry to attract visitors and to offer them the best experience possible during their stay.

For such purposes, several special laws have entrusted the Tourist Company with the responsibility of planning and promoting sustainable tourism programs and projects in the Island; implementing and coordinating the “Program for the Promotion, Protection and Conservation of Beaches of Puerto Rico Aspirants to the Blue Flag,” promoting among tourists and foreigners in the Island the acquisition and purchase of Puerto Rican crafts; and administering the operation of slot machines in casinos. Their vision is to make Puerto Rico the main tourist destination in the Caribbean.

The process of attracting a higher number of tourists to our coasts is a complex one. Although Puerto Rico has many attractions that interest tourists, such as beaches, the enjoyment of nature, the variety of restaurants, among others, it must compete with other destinations in the Caribbean and neighboring zones, where operating costs are lower than those in the Island, which becomes more relevant given the current economic crisis. Each day Puerto Rico faces greater challenges to continue competing as a tourist destination.

Promotional campaigns abroad and aggressive marketing programs at the international level are indeed essential to position Puerto Rico effectively. However, the high quality of service is a determining factor that tourists take into consideration at the time of choosing a place to vacation and to eventually return. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of service as an essential and fundamental factor.

In that sense, the Tourist Company has the responsibility of satisfying the great expectations that tourists have from the time of their arrival, whether at the airports or ports of Puerto Rico. To achieve this, it would be convenient to constantly provide tourists with all the tools available to make their stay a pleasant one, including information that could be of interest to them and a greater access to the tourist centers of the Tourism Company.

Tourism is undoubtedly one of the most important economic enterprises of the Island. Tourism activities constitute one of the main sources of income and jobs for our economy by contributing to the socioeconomic development and the improvement of our quality of life. For such reason, efforts should be directed to strengthening said industry by improving the quality of services it offers. Thus, this Legislative Assembly deems it necessary and meritorious to add a subsection (16) to Section 6 of Act No. 10 of June 18, 1970, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rico Tourism Company Act,” for the purpose of developing and implementing a

Tourist Guide Program, in order to improve the quality of tourist services provided in the Island.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.- Subsection (16) is hereby added to Section 6 of Act No. 10 of June 18, 1970, as amended, to read as follows:

“Section 6.- Responsibilities.

The Company shall be responsible for:

(1) ...

(16) Developing and implementing a Tourist Guide Program which shall comprise, without it being understood as a limitation:

a) tourist information centers in airports, ports, tourist zones and sites in locations of tourist and cultural interest, inns, transportation systems, important activities and events, restaurants, among others;

b) programs to welcome tourists in special events, conventions, and others activities endorsed by the Company that consist of activities that could periodically include artistic and/or musical performances and artisan and cultural exhibitions in the facilities of airports and ports terminals;

c) an official guide for tourists including, but not limited to, advice and information important to them, so that they can make the most of their visit to the Island;

d) activities in the main tourist zones in Puerto Rico to exhibit our culture through artistic and musical performances.”

Section 2.- The Tourism Company is hereby authorized to devise a comprehensive and coherent plan to develop the Program herein created, with the collaboration of other state agencies such as the Ports Authority. Said Program should take into consideration the particularities of each zone.

Section 3.- The Tourism Company is hereby authorized to promulgate regulations as are necessary to comply with the provisions of this Act.

Section 4.- This Act shall take effect immediately after its approval.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following **Act No. 256-2011 (S. B. 1948)** of the **6th Regular Session** of the **16th Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico**:

AN ACT to add a subsection (16) to Section 6 of Act No. 10 of June 18, 1970, as amended, known as the "Puerto Rico Tourism Company Act," for the purpose of developing and implementing the Tourist Guide Program, in order to improve the quality of tourist services provided in the Island.

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, on this 15th day of January, 2015.

Juan Luis Martínez Martínez
Acting Director