

(S.B. 2522)

(No. 256)

(Approved August 31, 2000)

AN ACT

To name the Parcelas Vázquez rural school of the Municipality of Salinas, as the Rafael Esparra Cartagena School.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Rafael Esparra Cartagena was born February 7, 1941, at the Parcelas Vázquez of Salinas. His parents *Doña* Marciala Cartagena and *Don* Félix Esparra inculcated in Rafael high moral and spiritual values.

Rafael studied his primary school at Parcelas Vázquez rural school of Salinas where his academic performance was excellent. He studied his intermediate school at José Padín Second Unit School and High School at the Luis Muñoz Rivera School of Salinas obtaining his High School diploma with honors.

From an early age he showed a desire to serve his fellow men and the community in which he was born. He taught catechism classes for many years and his home was a prayer center of the holy rosary in the community.

He started post-secondary studies in 1959 at the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto in Ponce. In spite of his economic and cultural limitations he completed the degree of Bachelor in Social Sciences and Psychology in 1962. After finishing his studies he decided to move to the United States where he continued his studies and started an arduous professional and civic career.

In 1965, this Salinas native started directing the project of Catholic Charities in Brooklyn, New York, in which he labored for five (5) years. Meanwhile, he followed studies towards a Masters degree at Fordham University of New York, finishing in 1967.

In 1971 he started working for the New York Technical college, New York, as Director of Student Activities. After that he worked as professor and chairman of the Human Services Department, Administrative member of the Academic Department and Special Assistant to the President (1979). While working in the aforementioned positions he continued doctoral studies, being awarded in 1979 the degree of Doctor in Administration and Higher Education and Human Services at the Sarasota University of Florida.

Because of his extensive professional and civic work this Puerto Rican was appointed in 1980, as Special Assistant of the Mayor of New York, a position he occupied during four years. In 1984 he was appointed Deputy Commissioner of the Fire Corps Department New York and in 1997 he was President of the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation. In 1998 he was designated by Mayor Giuliani to preside the New York City Housing Assistance Corporation Residential Mortgage Insurance Corporation, engaged in community preservation and in the encouragement of capital investment to construct housing for low and moderate income families. At the present time he is a member of the Board of Arbitration New York Stock Exchange.

In the civic and social ambit he has held positions such as: member of the New York State Commission to bring the Dodgers headquarters to Brooklyn (1997-), member of the Red Cross Council (1995), member of the Wood hull Hospital Community Council (1995-), President and founder

of Comunidad Hispana (1992-), Brooklyn Merchants Association (1992-) member of the Daytop Village Council of Trustees, member of the Counseling board of the Kings County District Attorney, member of the Board of Directors of the Infinity Broadcasting Corporation (1987-1988).

The professional and civic performance of Rafael has been acknowledged by diverse entities such as: Mention of Excellence for Service to the Academic and Civic Communities of Brooklyn (1997); The Duarte, Sánchez y Mella Medal awarded by the President of the Dominican Republic, Joaquín Balaguer, for his work in benefit of the Dominican Community in New York (1990); Merit Certificate awarded by WCBS/WCBS 88 and the Anti Defamation League for his work in “A World of Difference”, among others.

The extensive work carried out by this Puerto Rican that has enhanced the name of Salinas and of Puerto Rico, deserves recognition. This Legislature deems the best acknowledgement that can be awarded this outstanding human being is to name after him the rural school of his place of birth that he attended and where he studied his primary grades,. His fellow citizens, who reside at the Parcelas Vázquez Community of Salinas, would be pleased by this designation.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.- The rural school of the Parcelas Vázquez of the Municipality of Salinas is hereby designated as the Rafael Esparra Cartagena School.

Section 2.- The Structures and Public Highways Denominating Commission of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, in coordination with the Department of Education, shall take the steps needed to comply with the

provisions set forth by this Act, without being subject to the provisions set forth by 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. 256 (S.B. 2522) of the 7th Session of the 13th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to name the Parcelas Vázquez rural school of the Municipality of Salinas, as the Rafael Esparra Cartagena School,

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

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

Elba Rosa Rodríguez-Fuentes
Director

