

(H. B. 1539)

(No. 61)

(Approved January 4, 2003)

AN ACT

To request the Building and Public Roads Designating Committee of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to study the possibility of naming the street located between the Department of Municipal Public Works and the building of Local 1575 of the International Longshoreman's Association (ILA), in the Puerto Nuevo sector, Municipality of San Juan, as "Guillermo Ortiz González Street".

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

The labor leader Mr. Guillermo Ortiz González comes from the Puerta de Tierra neighborhood, in San Juan, where he was born on February 10, 1911, the son of Mrs. María González and Mr. Félix Ortiz.

From a very young age, Mr. Ortiz Gonzalez attended the José Celso Barbosa School, in his native neighborhood and the Central High, in Santurce. He began working as a stevedore in the San Juan docks at a very early age, when the working conditions were difficult and the salaries were low. According to the Department of Labor's Annual Report (1934-35), workmen's wages were so low in the docks that "they lack the means to buy the things they urgently need" and it concluded that the working conditions were inhumane and humiliating.

The situation then faced by dockworkers a group of their leaders to get organized. One of those leaders was Mr. Guillermo Ortiz González, who together with Mr. Eusebio Moreno and others, established a chapter of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) in San Juan in 1938.

Mr. Ortiz González continued his fight to improve the quality of life and working conditions of dockworkers, who in their turn, elected him as ILA President, a position he occupied from 1944 until his death, on February 22, 2001.

He was one of the first workers who attended trade union training studies when the University of Puerto Rico's Institute of Work Relations started. For several years he was a member of the Consulting Committee that advised the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Development of the Worker's Rest and Recreation.

In 1996, he realized what he considered his golden dream: the building and inauguration of the "Port Workers House", a modern ten-story high building in the middle of Modern San Juan, with gym facilities and activity rooms for its members and the community in general.

In 1991, he was elected vice-president for the ILA Atlantic Coast District, - with an international scope - in the Convention celebrated in New York. In 1995, he was appointed international vice-president of the ILA Executive Board.

He was the receiver for the ILA Welfare Fund -PRSSA and for the Royalty Building Fund, Architect of the new amendments for mechanization which favored all dockworkers. He continued his fight on behalf of the dock workers until his death, at ninety (90) years of age.

Mr. Guillermo Ortiz González dedicated his life to the service of his fellow dockworkers. His devotion to the improvement of the quality of life and the working conditions of the workingman of the dock front deserve to be remembered and honored.

To such purposes, it is appropriate to name the street located between the Department of the Municipal Public Works and the building of Local

1575 of the International Longshoreman's Association (ILA), in the Puerto Nuevo sector, Municipality of San Juan, as "Guillermo Ortiz González Street."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO

Section 1.- The Buildings and Public Roads Designating Committee of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is hereby requested to study the possibility of naming the public way located between the Department of the Municipal Public Works and the building of Local 1575 of the International Longshoreman's Association (ILA), in the Puerto Nuevo sector, Municipality of San Juan, as "Guillermo Ortiz González Street."

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. 61 (H.B. 1539) of the 4th Session of the 14th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to request the Building and Public Roads Designating Committee of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to study the possibility of naming the street located between the Department of Municipal Public Works and the building of Local 1575 of the International Longshoreman's Association (ILA), in the Puerto Nuevo sector, Municipality of San Juan, as "Guillermo Ortiz González Street",

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 18st of February of 2004.

Elba Rosa Rodríguez-Fuentes
Director

