

(H. B. 1597)

(No. 126)

(Approved October 17, 2009)

## **AN ACT**

To declare the facilities where Colegio La Milagrosa in Río Piedras is located a historical landmark of Puerto Rico.

### **STATEMENT OF MOTIVES**

By the year 1890, Mrs. Socorro Capetillo y González and her son, Mr. Manuel Fernández-Capetillo, died in Spain, without leaving a will or direct descendants, thus leaving various plots of land, houses and money in Puerto Rico. Their closest relative, Mr. Diego Fernández-Vallejo, Marquis of Vallejo, inherited all their property. Mr. Diego Fernández transferred to the “Sociedad Protectora de los Niños” all his properties located in Puerto Rico.

The “Sociedad Protectora de los Niños” had the purpose of protecting poor children from abandonment, abject poverty, abuse, and immoral examples by providing them with education and seeing to their physical, moral, and intellectual development. Thus, the Marquis of Vallejo transferred the plots of land as a gift to the Bishop of Puerto Rico for the charitable purposes mentioned above. In the Deed executed on November 11, 1891, in Madrid, Spain, it was stated that the “Sociedad Protectora de los Niños” was to be established first in the possession denominated as “Río-Piedras,” since this was the place of residence of Mrs. Capetillo. This marked the beginning of the institution which one hundred eighteen (118) years later we know as Colegio La Milagrosa of Río Piedras.

Colegio La Milagrosa stands as a symbol of the evolution and development of what we know today as Río Piedras. When we visit central Río Piedras, we can note the majestic presence of this century-old structure that houses this school, located downtown. This school has witnessed transcendental historical changes, such as the consolidation and formation of downtown Río Piedras, as well as one of the most tragic accidents, namely, the Río Piedras explosion. During this unfortunate time, the school operated as a shelter and its architectural structure endured in the midst of all the destruction. This institution, during that time, became once more the center of Río Piedras, just as it had been one hundred (100) years before. This tragic incident, which marked the lives of all Río Piedras residents, prompted action to renew our body of laws and make it more stringent in matters of excavations.

The structure housing Colegio La Milagrosa is not only an example of a structure built by late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but it also showcases an architectural style rarely seen and which must be preserved. In terms of education, this school has stood out for its academic excellence and has been the alma mater of many illustrious Puerto Rican women who have greatly enriched our society.

In view of the high historical and cultural value of the facilities housing Colegio La Milagrosa in Río Piedras, this Legislative Assembly deems it necessary and convenient to declare the same a historical landmark, in order to preserve and ensure its conservation and history.

***BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF PUERTO RICO:***

Section 1.—The facilities where Colegio La Milagrosa in Río Piedras is located, are hereby declared a historical landmark.

Section 2.—The Planning Board and the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture shall take measures as necessary to fully and strictly comply with this Act.

Section 3.—The Institute of Puerto Rican Culture shall have sixty (60) days to fulfill the requirements to comply with Section 3.20 of the *Reglamento para la Designación, Registro y Conservación de Sitios y Zonas Históricas en Puerto Rico* [lit.: Regulation for the Designation, Registration, and Conservation of Historical Sites and Zones in Puerto Rico], Planning Regulation No. 5, promulgated on September 5, 2002.

Section 4.—The Commonwealth Office of Historic Conservation shall have the facilities housing Colegio La Milagrosa in Río Piedras within its jurisdiction and take measures as necessary so that this school is included in the National Register of Historic Places in Washington, D.C., so that the same may benefit from Federal funding allotted for this kind of property.

Section 5.—This Act shall take effect immediately after its approval.

## CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following **Act No. 126 (H. B. 1597)** of the **2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislature** of Puerto Rico:

**AN ACT** to declare the facilities where Colegio La Milagrosa in Río Piedras is located a historical landmark of Puerto Rico.

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

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2011.

María del Mar Ortiz Rivera, Esq.  
Director