



## Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

Office of the Governor  
La Fortaleza  
[www.fortaleza.gobierno.pr](http://www.fortaleza.gobierno.pr)

October 22, 2006

### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **Governor's Chief of Staff presents the Economic Development and Government Transformation Plan for Puerto Rico**

*Emphasis on changes that provide benefits to the individual citizen*

**San Juan, Puerto Rico** – The Chief of Staff to the Governor, Jorge Silva-Puras, presented today the Administration's Economic Development and Government Transformation Plan for Puerto Rico aimed at promoting economic development and transforming the Commonwealth government to make it more agile and responsive to the needs of all Puerto Ricans.

The Plan is based on the vision that a competitive economy is an essential requirement to finance the social, cultural and physical infrastructure that Puerto Ricans want, and establishes six principal strategies:

1. To develop first-rate infrastructure and enable private investment with new financing models and an agile and effective assessment processes.
2. To incorporate Puerto Rico swiftly in the knowledge economy, creating on the Island a center of excellence in Biotechnology, Engineering and Information Technology.
3. To promote local entrepreneurship by supporting our local businesses (Apoyo al de Aquí) with new financing alternatives and providing access to internal and external markets.
4. To make the tourist industry an engine of economic development for Puerto Rico.
5. To diversify our energy sources to reduce dependency on crude oil by half.

The document presented acknowledges that full economic development cannot be achieved without an effective government. For this reason, it proposes the transformation of the government as a priority to improve the quality of the services provided to the citizens and to better train and qualify public employees.

More specifically, the Plan proposes that affirmative decisions be taken to: incentivate the professionalization of public employees, transform the structure of government agencies, maximize the use of technology to provide better services, revise regulations, procedures and laws that govern the administration of public agencies; decentralize, regionalize and municipalize the services to the citizenry; maximize the use of government-owned immovable properties through its development, sale or transferal; and increasing transparency, access and openness of the government to the citizen.

“The target of the Plan we present today is to satisfy the needs of our most important client, the citizen. All the measures proposed in this document, most of which are already being implemented by different agencies arise from the same basic question: What measures must each agency take to speed up the delivery of services and improve the quality of its performance?” the Chief of Staff explained.

“In this regard, the professionalization of the human resources in our agencies and instrumentalities is key to strengthen the areas of direct service to the citizens and provide them with the quality level they deserve”, he added.

The Chief of Staff announce that creation of a Special Fund for the Retraining of Public Employees, with a multiannual contribution from the Department of Labor and Human Resources, which will provide public officers better opportunities of occupational growth with the ultimate objective of improving the excellence of the services delivered.

Silva-Puras also emphasized the use of technology as a means to significantly improve the interaction between the government the citizen. In this effort, he announces a series of projects that integrate technology into the services provided by the government to the citizen. Among them are the following examples:

- The Student Information Sistema that will allow parents to monitor on-line from their homes the academic performance and attendance to school of their children in public schools.
- The COMSTAT project of the Puerto Rico Police, which establishes criminal incidence maps, and will serve to guide the agency to fighting crime in a more rapid, targeted, updated and focused manner.
- The digitalization of the Corporations and Trade Marks Register of the Department of State and the Office of Management and Budget to provide on-line access to all users through the Internet.

Silva Puras emphasized that “there will be no layoffs or privatizations.” He explained that “the gradual and programmed reduction of the government will come about, just as it has been done up to this date, through resignations and retirements, including incentivated early retirement, that will allow us to gradually reduce the number of positions in each agency”.

In line with the Plan, the Chief of Staff announced the consolidation of the components of the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation under one single unit. This consolidation will integrate administrative areas and functions, among other, to create a more agile, efficient and cost-effective administrative structure.

Silva Puras also announces the fusion of the Human Resources in Public Service Administration System Appeals Commission, the Commission for Investigation, Processing and Appeals, the Working Relations Commission, and the Working Relations Board into a single adjudicative forum.

“These forums that examine worker-employer relation cases and human resources management cases of public servants are currently separate entities even though they deal with issues that are very much related. This fusion will maximize the resources working on these revisions and will speed up the resolution of worker-employer and human resources management controversies,” the executive said.

Other government reorganizations mentioned by the Chief of Staff that are already underway are: the consolidation of the Office of Youths Affairs to the Department of Sports and Recreation; the reduction of School Districts through the consolidation of Educational Regions of the Department of Educations; and the reorganization of the Family Department; among others.

###

**Contacts: Carmen Serrano, Assistant Press Secretary (787) 721-9166  
Milagros Morales Ramos, Press Officer**