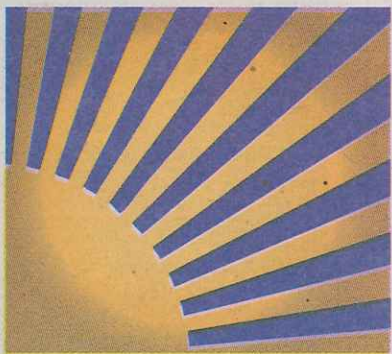


Judge nixes estate inheritance in Anhang case **LOCAL PAGE 6**



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Rescuers recover
more infant bodies in
Mexico nursery fire

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Surrounded by legislators, government officials and Canóvanas Mayor José Soto, Gov. Fortuño on Monday signs the Public-Private Alliance Bill aimed at providing corporate support for government infrastructure projects. During the ceremony at a Canóvanas road construction site, a few protesters raised signs, calling the bill a form of privatizing public services. Left to right: House Speaker Jenniffer González, Department of Public Transportation chief Rubén Hernández Gregorat, Sen. Lornna Soto, Mayor Soto, Sen. Roberto Arango and Economic Development Secretary José Ramón Pérez-Riera.

Alliance is law

Fortuño signs public-private deals bill

LOCAL PAGE 3

OBJECTIVE REPORTING IS OUR LEGACY

Fortuño converts Alliance bill into law

BY XAVIRA NEGGERS
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Gov. Fortuño passed into law Monday the bill for public-private alliances, a measure the governor said will raise Puerto Rico's infrastructure to a world-class level and jumpstart the island's economy.

The measure will result in \$7 billion in investments and the creation of 23,000 direct and 120,000 indirect jobs over the next three to five years, Fortuño said after signing the bill into law Monday morning in Canóvanas accompanied by Senate President Thomas Rivera Schatz and House Speaker Jennifer González.

Under the new law, public and private sector would jointly develop landfills, dams and reservoirs, ports, sources of renewable energy, transportation and wireless communications systems, and the construction of schools and housing projects, among other areas of development. In exchange the Commonwealth would retain ownership of the works will private sector partners would operate the projects for 75 years, retaining the subsequent benefits from that operation.

"With the passage of this law we are regulating all private investment and will make every private investment public over the Internet," Fortuño said.

The governor also discounted critics claims the law is

Transportation Secretary Rubén Hernández Gregorat, Gov. Fortuño and Economic Development Secretary José Pérez-Riera are seen during Monday's signing of the public-private alliances law in Canóvanas.

Daily Sun/Miguel Ríos

veiled manner of privatizing public works, saying, "I want it to be very clear that this is not privatization."

To date, the Commonwealth has identified 28 projects that will be developed under the Public Private Sector Alliance model, the governor said.

The first Public Private Sector Alliance project in the pipeline is the \$250-million expansion of Route 66 over the 4.3-miles stretch from Canóvanas to Río Grande.

No backing down from layoffs

While he said he remains open to listening to the recommendations of labor leaders who organized last week's massive protest against public layoffs and the governor's neoliberal policies, Fortuño indicated that the layoff of some 30,000 public workers is a done deal.

"If they can come up with other ideas that will not increase anybody's taxes, we will remain open to receiving them and implementing them," Fortuño said, adding he plans to meet with labor leaders this week.

"Regardless, the government is going to continue with its restructuring plan with the aim of cutting public spending," the governor added.

"We are going to continue the reorganization of the Executive branch with the aim of joining government programs or agencies in the search for savings," Fortuño said. "We have to keep on looking for savings in all areas."

Fortuño indicated he would have no problems passing a law prohibiting discrimination in the workplace based on a person's sexual orientation, with the caveat he would not force faith-based organizations such as churches to comply with this law.

No end to amendments for Law 7

BY EVA LLORENS VELEZ
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The New Progressive Party House caucus has yet to reach an agreement on amendments to Law 7, specifically on a key disposition that would repeal the moratorium on tax credits given to developers who build projects in urban centers.

Under Law 7, the Fiscal Emergency Law, the tax credits granted to developers who do renewal projects on urban centers that were frozen, putting hundreds of developers in the hot seat with financial institutions who relied on the credits for the financing.

NPP Rep. Luis Leon said that he proposed repealing the moratorium for individuals who had already obtain certificates from the town's Land Zoning Offices granting the credits prior to March of this year.

The certificate is then taken to the Treasury Department, which is the entity that grants the credits.

"The caucus only wants to repeal the moratorium for individuals that received the certificate from the Treasury Department, leaving hundreds in the air," said Leon.

He noted that the Senate is already in agreement with his wording of the bill. "I will be asking the caucus for a reconsideration. The only alternative for these developers is to go bankrupt or obtained a foreclosure," he said.

The Ponce lawmaker says that on his southern town, some 46 projects alone have been affected by the clause in Law.

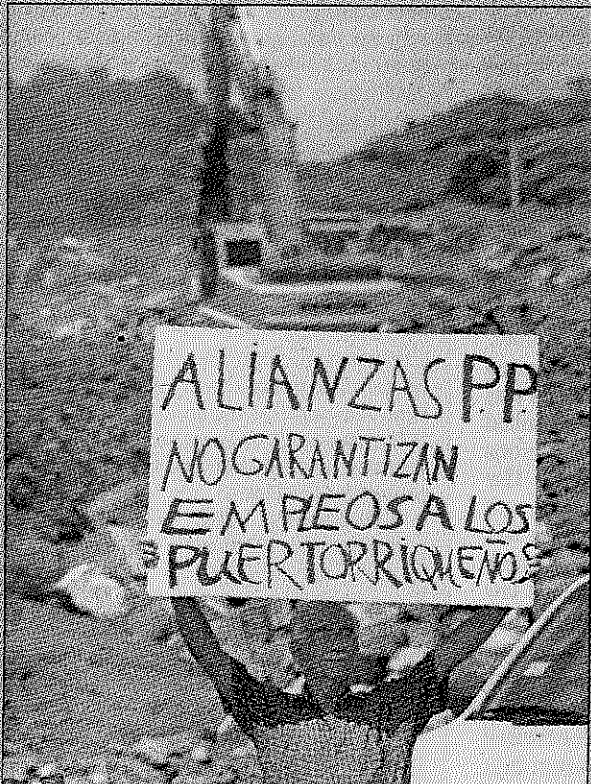
Recently, House Speaker Jennifer González introduced legislation to amend Law 7 to reduce the number of layoffs the government is proposing. But the caucus has been making additional amendments. On Monday, they postponed the work to receive an orientation on the American Recovery and Restructuring Act and funding for the towns.

The proposed amendments contained in House Bill 1640 would exempt corporations and partnerships

that make less than \$100,000 from the 5 percent over tax and to exempt homes that are being leased under Plan 8 from paying an over tax.

Another amendment would exempt business to business transactions from paying the sales and use tax under certain circumstances. Yet another amendment would exempt cigarettes manufactured introduced in Puerto Rico for export purposes from having to pay a proposed tax hike that is around \$11 for every 100 cigarettes.

"The caucus only wants to repeal the moratorium for individuals that received the certificate from the Treasury Department, leaving hundreds in the air."



Daily Sun/Miguel Ríos

Protester Miguel Rodríguez Jubilado shows his message against the new Alliance bill. It reads: "Public and private projects do not guarantee employment for Puerto Ricans." Gov. Fortuño signed the new legislation into law Monday.