



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

## Great Injustices

RUBEN DIAZ September 26, 2011

by New York State Senator Reverend Ruben Diaz

This past week, Troy Davis was executed under Georgia's death penalty laws. He was convicted in 1989 of shooting Police Officer Mark MacPhail.

Many believe he was wrongfully convicted, and a plea for his clemency was heard from almost a million people worldwide with petitions from Hands Off Cain, Pope Benedict XVI, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Jimmy Carter, William Sessions, Amnesty International and at least 40 members of the US Congress.

A series of court appeals ended with a unanimous decision late Wednesday night by the US Supreme Court refusing to block the execution of the 42-year old Black man.

While it was a great injustice to have one man who seemed to deserve clemency executed, the greater injustice in numbers alone is the steady march of executions that eliminates new human lives due to abortion practice in the United States.

The effort to use the execution of Troy Davis and put America in an uncomfortable spotlight by comparing our nation with rogue nations that support the death penalty is important.

Anti-death penalty voices for social justice should remain determined to overturn the death penalty in our country.

These advocates are committed to aggressive social change that will stop violence against human beings.

And so are pro-lifers.

It's so good to see that some death penalty opponents respect the lives of our unborn, but I cannot understand the reasoning of anyone who would rush out to defend the women and men on death row and yet support laws that extinguish innocent children in their mothers' wombs.

I wish they would also commit themselves to defending the right to life for our unborn children and I wish they would start right here in New York.

New York City's abortion rate averages at 41 percent. This is almost twice the national average. The rate among Hispanic children is 49 percent and the rate among Black children is 59.8 percent.

The innocent lives of Black and Hispanic children are so undervalued in their mothers' wombs here that more than half of these children never get the chance to smile or play or be a part of their families.

Our children are treasures – not burdens!

A billboard went up during Black History Month in a New York neighborhood where abortion rates are at a staggering 67%. The billboard's message stated a fact: "The most dangerous place for an African-American is in the womb." CNN reported that the sign was removed for public safety reasons, citing harassment by billboard opponents of the

restaurant staff in the building where the billboard was hung.

We must not ignore the facts. Human life, across its entire spectrum, deserves our care and respect.

I look forward to the day when groups that defend human life will unite with pro-life organizations to let the world know that all human life deserves protection and respect.