



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

Open Memo to My Senate Caucus Colleagues

RUBEN DIAZ October 24, 2011

To: Members of the New York State Senate Puerto Rican/ Latino Caucus

From: Senator Reverend Ruben Diaz

Date: October 24, 2011

Re: Our Show of Unity

This memo is to congratulate my Senate colleagues who serve as Members of the New York State Senate Puerto Rican/Latino Caucus: Senator Adriano Espaillat, Chair; Senator Gustavo Rivera, Vice-Chair; and Caucus Members Senator José Peralta, Senator Martin-Malavé Dilan, and Senator José M. Serrano. I congratulate all of you for showing real unity on behalf of our Caucus and our community by not attending the so-called Legislative Hispanic Unity Conference that was organized by our Senate Majority (Republican) Leader Dean Skelos.

Most importantly, I have to admire our Caucus Chairman, Senator Adriano Espaillat for his leadership.

I have to admire our Caucus Vice-Chair Gustavo Rivera for being forthright in the media last week by stating: "I will not be attending the conference. If the majority leader and the Senate Republicans were serious about addressing the issues affecting Latinos, they would have

asked their Latino counterparts in the Senate to help them organize a conference that reflects the issues that are impacting Latinos throughout the state such as immigrants' rights issues as well as the need to extend the millionaire's tax so that New York State is able to continue funding important services like education, housing, and healthcare that are so critical to our communities.”

I have to admire our Caucus Member Senator Jose Peralta who told the press: “It’s a dog-and-pony show that they’re putting together so that they can say that they actually put something together. As opposed to when we’re up in session and we’re actually pushing for legislation that matters to

Latinos – like immigration, like housing, like safe streets, like good schools and good jobs – and when we have an opportunity do actually move those pieces of legislation forward, when we have an opportunity to actually do something productive for the Latino community...then it doesn’t take effect. There is no dialogue.”

The number of Hispanic elected officials in New York State continues to grow with more than 50 Hispanic elected officials in office today. This includes two Hispanic Members of the U.S. Congress, One Borough President, six State Senators, Ten Members of the State Assembly, and 11 Members of the New York City Council. It is also proper to note the many elected district leaders, state committee members, and many others of Hispanic descent, throughout the state.

To find out that out of so many Hispanic elected officials, only two attended Senator Dean Skelos’s publicity event this weekend certainly demonstrates a great show of unity among Hispanics who did not attend. This speaks volumes!!!!

I understand that only two Hispanic elected officials attended. They are Assembly Member Guillermo Linares and Assembly Member Naomi Rivera. But rumor has it that Assemblyman Linares is pursuing Republican support so that Congressional districts might be more geared to his needs and I have no idea what Assembly Member Naomi Rivera's intentions were by attending Senator Dean Skelos' event and not joining the rest of the Hispanic elected officials.

It was mentioned that Roberto Ramirez attended Senator Dean Skelos' event, but he is no longer an elected official. Roberto Ramirez is a hired consultant and it is believed that he served as part of the consulting firm for the event.

Again, I congratulate you all and all New York State Hispanic elected officials that stood up for their community.

Excelsior!!!!