



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

What You Should Know

RUBEN DIAZ April 29, 2013

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We Did Not Make the Cut

You should know that the "Albany 100 Power List" was just put out by the City and State newspaper listing the 100 most influential persons in New York.

As you my dear readers know, Albany is the Capitol of New York State, and it is the place where all laws for the State are made due to the fact that this is where the Legislature and the Governor meet.

In Albany, you will find the Governor's Office and the Governor's Mansion. In Albany you will find the Senate and Assembly Chambers. You will also find all sorts of lobbyists walking the hallways back and forth. When those lobbyists want to meet with Senators, all they have to do is to hand their business cards to the Sergeant-at-Arms who in turn will go into the

Senate Chamber and hand the wanted Senator the business card of the lobbyist and ask him or her to come outside to meet with the lobbyist. You should know that this is done because lobbyists are prohibited from going inside the Chamber.

I will not lie to you if I say that in Albany you will find all of the movers and shakers in New York State.

Therefore, when you read City and State's "Albany 100 Power List," you may find it interesting that there are only two Hispanics on that list. What happened to all of those Hispanic elected officials who walk the hallways giving the appearance that they are prima donnas?

City and State included Robert Mujica and Tonio Burgos as the only two Hispanics among the most influential people in Albany.

You should know that Robert Mujica works for the Republican Majority. He is a very humble, down to earth, intelligent and knowledgeable person, and boy, when we talk about influence, I feel that Robert Mujica has more influence than the Governor himself! City and State was 100% right naming Robert Mujica.

Tonio Burgos "es un peje Viejo". In English, that means he is an old fish whom I met when he was an assistant to then Congressman Herman Badillo.

Back in 1977, Tonio Burgos and Victor Albandoz got me an apartment in the Robert E. Moore Houses on 149th Street and Jackson Avenue in The Bronx where I moved with my three little children to have a roof over their heads.

Mujica and Burgos make me proud to be Hispanic. That said, what happened to the rest of us?

As for me, because of my conservative and pro-family values, the lobbyists don't like to be seen talking to me. During the debate on gay marriage, I was the only Democratic Senator to vote against gay marriage, and unable to persuade any other Democrat to follow me, and when it came to the Floor for a vote, they didn't even allow me to speak. As you can see, my influence is very limited, so count me out.

Here are some names of other Hispanic officials who did not make the cut:

Assembly Member Carmen Arroyo: She is the first Puerto Rican woman elected to the New York State Assembly. She has been around since Methuselah. She walks around – and I advise you to be very careful because if you get under her skin, she will open her mouth and use foul and profane language (words that I will not even begin to describe or print here) to humiliate you and to try to put fear into you. Those skills of hers have apparently not worked because she did not make the cut.

Senator Martin Malavé Dilan: He was once a very powerful part of Vito Lopez's dynasty. He is the father of City Council Member Erik Dilan. In 2008 Senator Dilan was named among those who wanted to be Senate Majority Leader. Apparently without Vito Lopez in Albany, people think his influence has diminished and I am afraid that might be why he did not make the cut.

Senator Adriano Espaillat: He is the first Dominican to be elected as a State Senator. He came close to defeating Charlie Rangel for a U.S. Congressional seat. Since that time, he has changed his style, his wardrobe, he stands a little taller – but surprise, surprise – he also fell short.

Assembly Member Felix Ortiz: He is the President of a thing called "Somos El Futuro". He travels around the world like a prima donna, bragging about everything and telling the

whole world that he is a doer. Obviously he has to work a little harder because he fell short of making City and State's requirements.

Senator José Peralta: He is a candidate trying to be the next Queens Borough President. He claims to be a spokesperson for unions. Senator Peralta does not go to nor participate in meetings or events where he is not the centerpiece. He always has to be front and center, calling the shots. He thinks he has all the influence in the world, but ladies and gentlemen, you should know that he did not even make the cut.

Senator Gustavo Rivera: He believes that he is so powerful and influential and seems to have forgotten the influence of county leaders in the Bronx who got him where he is. You should know that sometimes titles and power go to people's heads and they can get over-inflated egos. After reading City and State's list, I can imagine that Senator Rivera's ego has been deflated because he did not make the cut.

Assembly Member José Rivera: He served for many years in office in both the New York City Council and as a Member of the State Assembly, and as former Democratic Chair for Bronx County. His son, Council Member Joel Rivera, is the Democratic Majority Leader in the New York City Council. His daughter is an ex-Assembly Member. With these credentials, City and State did not consider José Rivera influential enough to make the cut.

Senator José Marco Serrano: He serves as the Chair of the State Senate Democrat Conference and is the son of Congressman José Serrano, a senior member of the U.S. Congress. Even with these credentials, he was not considered influential enough to make the list.

Finally, I want you all to know that I am writing this to advise my Hispanic colleagues, who are mostly liberals fighting for liberal values. They should know that even a liberal

newspaper like City and State doesn't consider them to be influential enough to be part of the "Albany 100 Power List."

Again, I have to ask myself, is this racist, or are their findings genuine? Or is it that City and State understands this business of politics, and that while there are some who flatter and pamper the egos of folks who think they are influential, they're only being used when needed – usually for numbers and nothing else.

Maybe if my Hispanic colleagues would listen to me and stand firm and let themselves be respected, next year they will be counted among the most influential liberal democrats on the "Albany 100 Power List."

This is Senator Reverend Rubén Díaz and this is what you should know.