



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

What You Should Know

RUBEN DIAZ February 4, 2014

| ISSUE: **HOUSING**

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

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A Few Questions for Mayor Bill de Blasio Regarding the New York City Housing Authority

You should know that the problems within the New York City Housing Authority are among the biggest headaches that our new Mayor Bill de Blasio will have to confront during his tenure as New York City Mayor.

The rampant problems in the New York City Housing Authority are well known and have been well documented in a series of articles written in the New York Daily News by journalists such as Greg B. Smith, Denis Slattery, Lisa L. Colangelo, Jan Ransom, Kerry Burke and Bill Hutchinson among others. They all have written vast stories about the unhealthy conditions, mismanagement, neglect, abuses, poor maintenance and lack of respect and consideration to New York City Housing Authority residents.

“Be careful what you wish for, you may get it,” is an old proverb attributed to a classic horror story that appeared in Harpers Monthly in 1902. I fully realize that Mayor Bill de Blasio was not the Mayor when all these problems occurred. Nonetheless, they were one of the central topics and issues during his campaign. Therefore, I have a few questions for our Mayor Bill de Blasio.

1) As a candidate for Mayor, Bill de Blasio, along with the Rev. Al Sharpton and the other Democratic candidates for Mayor: Christine Quinn, John Liu, Bill Thompson and Anthony Weiner, spent one hot, humid July night sleeping in an apartment in the Lincoln Houses.

After that sleepless night, Mr. Mayor, what did you learn from that experience and how will you use that experience to help the millions of residents who live in New York City Housing Authority apartments?

2) As recently as August, 2013, the New York City Housing Authority failed to spend fifty (50) million dollars that was allocated for repairs. While this money was allocated by the New York City Council, it was taxpayer money that should have been used for much needed repairs.

Mr. Mayor, what has happened to the fifty (50) million dollars and have the repairs been made?

3) In July, the New York Daily News reported that while forty-two (42) million dollars had been set aside for security cameras, only 11 had been installed out of a total of 86.

Mr. Mayor, what is the status of the installation of the remaining 75 security cameras?

4) In August, in the heat of the summer, raw sewage was flowing from toilets and bathtubs in Senior Citizens' ground floor apartments in the Throggs Neck Houses.

Mr. Mayor, what has been done to fix this disgusting problem and serious health issue that our Senior Citizens have been living with in the New York City Housing Authority apartments?

5) In December, the New York City Housing Authority agreed to clean up mold and related problems within 15 days and it signed off on a settlement agreeing to the supervision of a federal court.

Mr. Mayor, the 15 days have come and gone. Has anyone been assigned from your administration to find out what is the status of the mold remediation?

6) Senior citizens were freezing in their apartments in the Throggs Neck Houses and Mott Haven Houses two days before Thanksgiving, and just last week the same problem occurred in the PS 139 Conversion Houses in Harlem because the heating systems failed.

Mr. Mayor, what will be done to fix the heating systems in every NYCHA building, especially those that have been so neglected in minority areas such as the Bronx and Harlem, so we don't have to worry about Senior Citizens freezing to death?

Ladies and Gentlemen, we all know that these problems are not Mayor de Blasio's fault, but they are now his problem and he has the duty and responsibility to find answers and solutions, because after all, he slept in one of these apartments on the condition and promise that if elected Mayor he would find remedies to these problems. And as I said before "Be careful what you wish for, you may get it."

And now Mr. Mayor, you got it.

I am Senator Rev. Rubén Díaz, and this is what you should know.

