



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Things That You Should Know

RUBEN DIAZ April 23, 2014

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

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You should know that on June 24, 2014, New York State will host its Primary only for candidates running for the US Congress. This legal change was made 2 years ago when Federal District Court Judge Gary L. Sharpe ruled in a lawsuit that a September primary will not allow sufficient time to send absentee ballots to military voters. This will be the second time that New Yorkers will experience separate primaries for federal and state races.

You should also know that the Bronx has become a hot topic for the June 24th Congressional Primaries. There are two contested Congressional seats within the borders of the Bronx that will be decided by Bronx County voters.

You should know that Congressman Charlie Rangel, who now represents part of the Bronx, will be facing a rematch by State Senator Adriano Espaillat. Every single Hispanic elected official has thrown his and her support behind the aspirations of Adriano Espaillat - except for Bronx Congressman José Serrano and his son, Senator José Marco Serrano - who as of yet have refused to support the Dominican-born Congressional candidate.

There is also a Dominican woman by the name of Yolanda Garcia who announced her candidacy, and is expected to take Dominican votes away from Adriano Espaillat.

These two issues about Congressman Serrano's refusal to endorse Espaillat - and Yolanda Garcia's possible draw from Dominicans - may prove to be Espaillat's Achilles' heel.

A similar picture is painted on Congressman Rangel's side where an African-American leader, Reverend Michael Waldron is another contender against the incumbent Congressman. Reverend Waldron is the pastor of the First Corinthian Baptist Church in Harlem and ministries director of Al Sharpton's National Action Network. He is expected to draw votes away from Congressman Rangel's Harlem base. This could be Congressman Rangel's Achilles' heel.

You should know that Charlie Rangel is getting support from former US President Bill Clinton, US Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, and the Minority Leader of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi.

You can see how this June 24th Congressional Democratic Primary will draw all eyes on Bronx County and the elections of Charlie Rangel and Adriano Espaillat. Both candidates come with heavy endorsements and carry heavy expectations - and they both have their Achilles' heels. Therefore, this is may very well be the war of the Titans!

Aside from this, you should know that Congressman José Serrano - who has always counted on the Bronx Democratic County's endorsement and support - has learned how different it will be for him this year as he will be responsible for collecting his own petitions. He will need close to 1,200 valid signatures - and he only submitted a little over 4,000. In the past, the Bronx Democratic County has always helped him to come in with 15,000 - 20,000 signatures. This lesson given by the Democratic Bronx Committee to Congressman Serrano will make everyone understand how different it is when you don't have County support.

You should also know that in September there will be a regular Democratic primary for New York State Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, State Senate and State Assembly. Again, the Bronx will be a hot topic where there are two State Senators who might be facing tough and serious primaries.

First, New York City Councilmember Fernando Cabrera is expected to challenge State Senator Gustavo Rivera. This race is gearing up to be a very interesting September primary. And - State Senator Jeff Klein is expected to be challenged by former New York City Councilman and former New York Attorney General Oliver Koppell.

We all know that perception is everything in politics. That said, on Tuesday, April 22nd, Senator Jeff Klein held a press conference to kick off his re-election campaign with the support of every single elected official from Bronx County. There were union leaders and business leaders and community residents all gathered in what I can only describe as a majestic show of force. I can only imagine that a show of force like that would send shivers up the spine of anyone expected to challenge Senator Jeff Klein.

If I were one of the potential contenders in Senator Jeff Klein's primary race, after hearing about and seeing what happened at the April 22nd gathering, I would probably issue a press release saying something like this: "After consulting with my family and loved ones, at this

time I have decided not to run for any office so I can spend more time with my family and children."

That is something I would do if I were one of those challengers - but I am not one of them.

I am Senator Reverend Rubén Díaz, and these are things you should know.