



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

## We Should Take Care of Our Own Before Anybody Else

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**WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW**

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### **We Should Take Care of Our Own Before Anybody Else**

You should know that the bold statements made by President Barack Hussein Obama, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, with respect to the compassion that Americans need to have for the Syrian refugees, do not reflect the actions of these three leaders.

It is important for you to know that here in the United States of America, we have more than 11 million undocumented immigrants. We have millions of senior citizens who live in poverty and have to decide if they should eat, pay their rent, buy their medication, or just allow themselves to die. Many of our nation's veterans remain homeless, without enough food to eat, without disability benefits, and without tuition assistance.

Millions of Americans are homeless, going hungry every night. So many live hand to mouth,

with parents working two or three jobs just to make ends meet. American families struggle just to eat and pay for their children's higher education – while non-Americans attend our schools tuition free.

It is also important for you to know that here in New York City, we have more than 40,000 homeless families. This week, almost 60,000 people will sleep in New York City's municipal shelters. People who don't have anywhere to live are placed in shelters like animals. So many of their children receive poor education in overcrowded public school classrooms.

According to U.S. State Department, the United States is the largest donor of humanitarian aid to Syria (we have donated \$4.5 billion dollars since the Syrian Conflict began in 2011). Nonetheless, President Obama talks about the need for us to be humanitarians, and insists upon bringing thousands of refugees to the United States, against the will of the majority of the American people and the United States Congress. Many people believe that by doing this, the President may be putting American lives in danger.

On the other hand, President Obama will go down in history of this nation as the President who has deported more people than any other President. Among those deported are Dominicans, Mexicans, Africans, Haitians, Asians, and others. These people have been deported, sometime breaking their families apart, without showing them any compassion.

As they say: All Lives Matters.

It is also important, my dear reader, for you to know that Mayor Bill de Blasio has also come out criticizing anyone who opposes bringing Syrian refugees into the United States, calling them: "an embarrassment to this country."

Those words were spoken by New York City's Mayor after two years into his Administration, as he refuses to even admit the chaotic conditions of New York City's homeless.

We have to be thankful to New York City Police Department's Commissioner William Bratton who publicly criticized his boss, stating: "The mistake the Administration made early on was not validating what everyone was seeing ... The problem was increasing."

It is important for Mayor Bill de Blasio to address the egregious conditions that exist in our public schools, where teachers cannot properly teach because of the lack of resources, and children are subjected to extreme overcrowd conditions in the classroom.

He should also take care of the 40,000 homeless families in the City of New York and all of the problems that exist in the City's homeless shelters.

Families throughout New York City are going through hell because of the skyrocketing rents. Residents in New York City's Housing Authority buildings don't receive essential repairs for their apartments for more than three years. Their roofs are leaking, causing all sorts of health problems for people who are exposed to mold and mildew. Their apartments are infested with rats and roaches, etc. etc. - and the Mayor talks about the need for compassion.

And we should not forget our beloved Governor Andrew Cuomo, who has come out in public to use the Statue of Liberty as a reason why we should be compassionate. If we don't welcome refugees, Governor Cuomo says we should "take down the Statue of Liberty" because of what it symbolizes.

But surprise, surprise. As recently as last week, New Yorkers are circulating a letter and collecting signatures to put pressure on Governor Andrew Cuomo so he could assign money to be spent on the housing conditions for families, senior citizens and homeless in the State of New York, money that he continues to refuse to allocate.

In the Book of Galatians, Paul the Apostle orders us: "So let's not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don't give up, or quit. Right now, therefore, every time we get the chance, let us work for the benefit of all, but first with the people closest to us ..." [Gal 6:9-10]

My dear reader, we cannot bring more refugees into our nation when we continue to deport and divide immigrant families, especially when we give our own families little chance to survive.

There are almost 25,000 children sleeping in New York City's municipal shelter system. Classrooms in our public schools are overcrowded. The fate, health and security of more than 11 million undocumented immigrants remain uncertain. As our aging population continues to grow, senior citizens continue to have their critical services cut. Our Veterans are living in the middle of what is called a "leadership crisis" within the healthcare system that serves over 9.1 million veterans.

We should do good to everyone, as Paul said, but first we should do for our own.

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