



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

## MELISSA MARK-VIVERITO, JEFFREY DINOWITZ, ET AL ... AND THEN THEY CALL THEMSELVES DEFENDERS OF THE POOR?

SEN. RUBEN DIAZ May 6, 2016

What You Should Know

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**By Senator Rev. Rubén Díaz**

**32nd Senatorial District**

**718-991-3161**

### **MELISSA MARK-VIVERITO, JEFFREY DINOWITZ, ET AL ... AND THEN THEY CALL THEMSELVES DEFENDERS OF THE POOR?**

You should know that there is an old saying that goes like this: “It’s one thing what you say, and another is what you do.” If we apply this expression to elected officials, we can see that all too often, what they say and what they do aren’t always the same.

You should know that some of these elected officials in New York say one thing and do the opposite, and they are often the first ones to call themselves defenders of the poor.

HaHaHaHa!

One of these elected officials is our New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, who together with the Democratic majority, approved and passed a law that adds an additional burden to the poor - especially senior citizens.

This new law requires for everyone to pay an extra 5 cents for each plastic bag people will use to put their groceries in. We all know that there are items which need 2-3 plastic bags. That means people will have to pay 5 cents for each one. (And stores that break this law will be hit with a \$250 penalty.)

It is important for you to know that there are many senior citizens in New York City who receive a total income of between \$500 and \$600 per month. This means that each month, these seniors have to decide if they should pay their rent, pay for their medications, pay for their rice and beans, or pay for their utilities. The cost for these plastic bags imposed upon the poor and our seniors by the so-called "defenders of the poor" just adds insult to injury.

Instead of our City Council Members using their votes to help defray costs or burdens for our senior citizens and poor people, and instead of finding ways to help decrease day-to-day expenses for people in need, the New York City Council continues to slowly crush our poor and our seniors by taking away money they just don't have.

I have to publicly commend the Bronx Democratic City Council Members who voted to oppose this punitive measure, who include James Vacca, Rafael Salamanca, Annabel Palma, Vanessa Gibson, and the Council Members from the other boroughs: Inez D. Barron, Joseph Borelli, Robert Cornegy, Jr., Chaim M. Deutsch, Inez E. Dickens, Mathieu Eugene, Vincent Gentile, David G. Greenfield, Barry S. Grodenchik, Karen Koslowitz, Rory Lancman, Steve Matteo, Darlene Mealy, Deborah L. Rose, Mark Treyger, and Eric A. Ulrich.

Another case that has been highlighted this week in the news involves a lawsuit that was filed against a Democratic Member of the New York State Assembly, Jeffrey Dinowitz.

According to an article titled "PS 24 assistant principal sues DOE" written by Shant Shahrigian, that was published on May 3, 2016 of The Riverdale Press: "The Spuyten Duyvil

School's (P.S. 24) Assistant Principal Manny Verdi says northwest Bronx Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz is seeking to keep minority and lower-income students out of the school, one of several bombshell allegations in a suit he filed on Tuesday against the Department of Education (DOE), Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña and District 10 Superintendent Melodie Mashel."

These are very serious charges.

I'm not saying whether the allegations are true or not, but if this report is credible, then my question is: How can this be so?

We already know that Jeffrey Dinowitz has been a vocal opponent of New York Charter Schools, which were created primarily to serve the educational needs of minority students. Charter schools enrolment are made up of more than 90 percent of Black and Hispanic children. Our children get a good education in these Charter Schools.

So how does Jeffrey Dinowitz – a Democrat who claims to be a defender of the poor – oppose Black and Hispanic children from being allowed to attend a public school in Riverdale, and at the same time, also oppose Charter Schools?

This is something that cannot be tolerated.

My question to Assemblyman Dinowitz is: "If you don't want our Black and Hispanic children going to your neighborhood school, and you also oppose sending our Black and Hispanic children to charter schools, how can you claim to defend the needs of the poor?"

If we look at these cases: the harm done by the City Council to the poor and senior citizens, and the other cases of preventing Black and Hispanic children from attending a good public school, and also opposing Charter Schools so our Black and Hispanic children could have

good educational opportunities, then I have to wonder why they call themselves defenders of the poor.

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