



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

## Kudos to Senator Simcha Felder and Senator José Peralta

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**WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW**

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**By Senator Rev. Rubén Díaz**

**District 32 Bronx County, New York**

**Tel 718-991-3161**

### **Kudos to Senator Simcha Felder and Senator José Peralta**

You should know that on January 17, 2017, the New York State Senate voted to protect our senior citizens, the poor and needy from being charged 5¢ for each plastic bag they get when they go shopping anywhere in New York City.

It is important for you to know that last year, the New York City Council passed legislation that is expected to go into effect on February 15, 2017, whereby people who shop in the five boroughs of New York will be charged 5¢ for each plastic bag. This means that if someone uses 5 plastic bags for groceries, they will be charged 5¢ for each one.

As you know, there are many NYC residents who shop for groceries that are packed in double bags. There are also times when people can easily use 10 or more plastic bags to pack their groceries. If this law were to take effect, for each and every plastic bag, they will have to pay an extra 5¢.

Thanks to Senator Simcha Felder and the Republicans in the Senate for introducing a bill to do away with that piece of legislation that will only impose that fee on the people who shop in the five boroughs of the City of New York.

But surprise, surprise. Every Democratic Senator who represent poor neighborhood in the City of New York, except for Senator José Peralta and myself, voted to maintain the City Council's bill to impose the detrimental 5¢ fee on their constituents.

We all know that many of our constituents live in households where every dollar counts. Can you imagine the burden of adding 50 cents or more to each shopping trip makes on the elderly and the poor?

One minority Democratic Senator from Brooklyn amazingly said that he though 5¢ was too little and the fee should be 10¢ per plastic bag. Could you imagine that?

It was disheartening to see Senators who represent the City of New York supporting the 5¢ fee for plastic bags, but it was even worse that among all six Hispanic Senators, only two, Senator José Peralta and myself, were the only ones who voted to protect our constituents from this fee.

It is imperative for you to know, dear reader, that senior citizens, along with people on fixed incomes, low income families, families who live in homeless shelters, and hardworking people who struggle to make ends meet will be hurt by this 5¢ per plastic bag fee. It adds up.

New York City residents would be charged not only for groceries, but any time they shop at Macys or any store that uses plastic bags, punishing the poor, the needy and senior citizens for environmental problems.

I don't blame Senator Liz Kruger, who represents the Upper East Side from for supporting the 5¢ fee, because her constituents can afford it. But to see Senators who represent minority communities supporting this imposed fee... now that is shocking.

It is very important for you to know that even though the New York State Senate voted to stop this legislation, it is now up to the New York State Assembly to also vote to do the same. Otherwise, our New York City residents will have to start paying the 5¢ fee on the week of St. Valentine's Day. What an irony!

And then, you will see these Senators going to senior citizen centers and campaigning in our neighborhoods telling the senior citizens how hard they fight for them, and how Republicans are the enemy. Ha ha ha!

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