



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

Without Goya, the Puerto Rican Day Parade has no Flavor

SENATOR RUBÉN DÍAZ May 15, 2017

| ISSUE: **NATIONAL PUERTO RICAN DAY PARADE, GOYA FOODS**

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

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Without Goya, the Puerto Rican Day Parade has no Flavor

You should know that after so many years as one of the principal sponsors, Goya Foods has decided to end its contribution and participation in the National Puerto Rican Day Parade.

There are many rumors floating around explaining why Goya Foods has decided to end its sponsorship of the National Puerto Rican Day Parade.

Those voices on the cutting edge of our community tell us why Goya is exiting the National Puerto Rican Day Parade. They foretell the very dangerous downfall that the Parade faces if Goya leaves, and some of them blame this on New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman.

You should already know that Goya not only sponsors the National Puerto Rican Day parade with its army of people including live music events, dancers, floats, baton twirlers, radio and

tv commercials, but Goya Foods also contributes more than \$200,000.00 to the National Puerto Rican Day Parade Committee.

As you know, a few years ago, New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman took advantage of his powers and resources as the Attorney General and then, as if he were Don Quixote de la Mancha brandishing his sword against a windmill that was sustaining the Parade, removed its President, Madelyn Lugo and her Board of Directors.

According to some, Attorney General Eric Schneiderman decided to give control of the Parade to the MirRam Group, which is led by Luis Miranda and Roberto Ramirez, who decided to appoint Ms. Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez as the new President, and some of their friends as Board Members.

Many people believe that New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman has neglected his duties to supervise and oversee the decisions, expenditures, actions and overall fiduciary responsibilities of the new board that he appointed. Without proper oversight, companies such as Goya Foods will retreat and end their association with the National Puerto Rican Day Parade.

It is said that there are other big sponsors such as Jet Blue Airlines that are also considering terminating their participation and association with the National Puerto Rican Day Parade.

As a Puerto Rican, I take this time and opportunity to make a public call upon the Executives of Goya Foods to reconsider their decision to continue their big and unique participation in the parade as they have done for so many years, through hurricanes, storms, bad weather and tough times for the Parade.

No matter what the situation has been or who has been directing the Parade, Goya Foods has always been a pillar that has supported this Parade - a cultural institution - that makes

us Puerto Ricans proud to see our people marching up Fifth Avenue every year.

The National Puerto Rican Day Parade and what it represents is much bigger, more essential and more important than any group of people or individuals who might like to take advantage of it for their own political or social agenda.

It is for that reason that we must not allow anyone, be it Eric Schneiderman, the MirRam Group, Ms. Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez, Mr. Carlos Velasquez, or anyone to try to use or abuse the Parade for their own personal, political, financial interest or social agenda.

So once again, I ask Goya Foods to reconsider their decision because if it's Goya, it has to be good, and without Goya, there is no flavor.

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