



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

What You Should Know

RUBEN DIAZ January 20, 2012

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By Senator Rev. Ruben Diaz

32nd Senatorial District Bronx County, New York

Tel. 718-991-3161

Believe it or not, the Hispanic Federation said that Governor Andrew Cuomo balanced the budget “on the backs of poor women, especially women of color.”

Dear reader, you should know that the Hispanic Federation, one of the biggest and well-known social service organizations, has a high reputation in our community. Apparently, those are the reasons why Senator Dean Skelos, tried to accumulate points within the Hispanic Community, by reaching out to them to help him organize the “Unidad Latina Legislative Conference”, which took place on October 21st and 22nd, at the Sheraton Hotel & Towers, in New York City.

I would have never imagined that such a strong statement would come from an organization that a short time ago, joined the Republican Party and its leader Senator Skelos, in convening a forum for the Hispanic Community knowing that the budget they are now criticizing was

put together jointly by Governor Cuomo and Senator Dean Skelos.

My dear reader, please don't get me wrong. I am delighted with such statements from the Hispanic Federation, but at the same time, I have to ask "Where were they?" And how come they did not express those sentiments during the so called Conference on "Hispanic Unity", organized by them and Senator Skelos?

As you all know, only two Senators out of the sixty-two voted against Governor Cuomo's and Dean Skelos' budget. Senator Tom Duane and I were the only two that had the courage to stand firm and reject a budget that in fact, as the Hispanic Federation stated, was balanced on the backs of the poor.

I cannot conceive that only the two of us, Senator Duane and I, were the only ones that comprehended that last year. I cannot understand why it has taken the Hispanic Federation and the Black & Hispanic Leadership in our community so long to start speaking out about the damage that Governor Cuomo and Senator Skelos' budget has inflicted on the communities of color and the poor living in the State of New York.

It is yet more exciting to read an article written by Adam Lisberg, in The National Institute for Latino Policy on January 17, 2012, stating the comments made by Lillian Rodriguez Lopez, President of the Hispanic Federation and a member of Gov. Cuomo's spending and government efficiency commission. According to Mr. Lisberg, Ms. Lopez stated "A lot of the proposals that are moving forward are moving forward without enough transparency and local engagement-. The Governor has been appointing a lot of Task Forces and Commissions on very specific areas, I believe that latinos, and particularly African-Americans have been under represented on those Task Forces". Go Lillian!

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