



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

What You Should Know

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The government is cutting social services for the poor, to the elderly they are reducing their meals and closing their senior centers, they are cutting our children's education and turning their backs on the needy... all of this to balance the state's budget.

My dear reader, you should know that all these aberrations are happening to the poor in our communities and the governor continues to cut their services. At the same time there are certain institutions that receive billions of dollars at the expense of the suffering poor.

Our hospitals and medical centers receive billions of dollars of public funds through Medicaid and Medicare in order to improve the health of the poor and the needy throughout the State. They pay the CEOs of these hospitals an exorbitant amount of

money, while at the same time they cut important programs and offer terrible services to the poor.

You, dear reader, should take a little walk around the emergency room, that is if you have not done so already, and you should ask the patients the following questions: how long have you been waiting here? Do you think the hospital is clean? What do you think about the services that are being provided? And above all else, you have to ask them about the treatment they receive from the staff.

Meanwhile these abuses get worse each day and medical centers are more abusive towards the poor population. Medicaid funds, as well as public funds, are paying administrative salaries, in order to supposedly alleviate patients' pain and suffering. Instead, what they are doing is inflicting pain by providing poor services.

You should know that according to the New York Times, Bronx Lebanon Hospital paid the chief executive an annual salary of 4.8 million dollars in 2007 and 3.6 million in 2008. At New York Presbyterian Hospital, the chief executive was paid 9.8 million dollars in 2007 and 2.8 million dollars in 2008. Mount Sinai Hospital paid its chief executive 2.7 million in 2008 and North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System paid its chief executive 2.4 million dollars in 2008.

These hospitals serve the State's poor communities and they receive billions of dollars to take care of them. How is it possible to cut service and criticize our people for receiving Medicaid and Medicare, while at the same time they are paying the chief executives these exorbitant salaries?

For example, Bronx Lebanon Hospital mainly serves Hispanics and African-Americans of the South Bronx, who stand in lines and wait all day to be treated; meanwhile the CEOs have tremendous offices with air conditioners, secretaries, and limousine services at their disposal.

My advice for these hospitals and medical centers is that instead of paying huge salaries to these CEOs, they should use the money to hire more nurses, personal care assistants, primary care doctors, and janitors in order to help the patients. Then the patients won't have to wait so long to be served and their waiting rooms would look and smell more decent.

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