



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

Senator Diaz's Statement on the Senate Vote to Allow Worship Services in Public Schools

RUBEN DIAZ February 6, 2012

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For Immediate Release

New York State Senator Reverend Ruben Diaz has issued the following statement in response to today's New York State Senate vote in favor of allowing worship services in public schools when schools are not in session:

"Today the New York State Senate voted 55 to 7 in favor of legislation to permit public schools to allow worship services in schools when school is not in session.

I am disappointed that seven Senators: Senator Liz Krueger, Senator Daniel Squadron, Senator Velmanette Montgomery, Senator Toby Ann Stavisky, Senator Tom Duane, Senator Bill Perkins, and Senator Suzi Oppenheimer – all Democrats – voted against this bill. You need to know that the 160 religious groups, including churches that rent space in public schools for their activities are all located in Democratic areas, and mostly minority members of the Democratic Party.

It was the Republican Senate – spearheaded by Senator Marty Golden – who took the bill and quickly passed it through the Senate Education Committee to get it to the Senate Floor, today Monday, February 6, 2012 in order to give all 62 Senators the opportunity to vote yes or no. Every Republican Senator voted in favor of this bill, and 23 Democrats also voted in favor of it.

It is shameful that despite the effort of Councilmember Fernando Cabrera, the New York City Council, which is controlled by Democrats, has thus far been unconvinced, unable and unwilling to even approve a simple resolution about this serious topic that is so important to many New Yorkers.

Assemblyman Nelson Castro is also failing to convince his more than 100 Democratic colleagues in the Assembly to pass this important piece of legislation, knowing that Mayor Bloomberg has given a deadline of February 12th to expel all those groups from using public buildings.

But today in the Senate, we have done our part, and I appreciate and congratulate the 23 fellow Democrats that joined the Republicans in voting for this legislation. Special mention must be given to the eloquent and strong defense offered by Senator Malcolm Smith, Senator John DeFrancisco, Senator John Flanagan and Senator Martin Golden himself"

For further information, please contact Senator Reverend Diaz at (718) 496-4793.