



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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What You Should Know

RUBEN DIAZ March 6, 2012

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Manhattan County Chair Assemblyman Keith Wright is dead wrong. (And so is Bronx County Chair Carl Heastie.)

By this time I'm pretty sure you already know about the desperate struggle we're having to maintain the strength and future of Black and Hispanic communities in New York State.

You should know that the way the lines have been drawn to define our districts is detrimental to our communities. The proposed lines will dilute the power for our people that we have gained through hard work and strong leadership.

Reverends Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton have both stepped up to the plate to call for Governor Andrew Cuomo to veto proposals that have been submitted because even they know that the proposed district lines will dilute the power of Black and Hispanic

communities.

I was shocked to read in an article by Andrew Hawkins titled "Minority Fury Growing Over New Congressional Maps" that Assemblyman Keith Wright declared: "This is not a caucus issue, this is not a Shelly issue. This is a county leader issue."

As my eyes continued down the page I could not believe what I was reading: Assemblyman Wright continued by saying, "If Carl Heastie and I could come to an agreement, we'd be all good. It's not a caucus issue, not a Shelly issue, it's between two county leaders. Shelly's in the middle."

These are by far the very worst statements that anyone representing any of our communities could possibly make.

You should know that in reality, this problem is not just the problem of two County leaders to work out, but the problem of EVERY elected person who represents Black and Hispanic communities.

This is most definitely a Black and Hispanic issue.

Is there anyone among us who actually believes that the future of our communities are in the hands of Assemblyman Keith Wright and Assemblyman Carl Heastie, and that when they get together the Black and Hispanic communities will all be okay?

What a laugh!

You should know that it is ludicrous to think that "This is not a Shelly issue" when we know perfectly well that everything in Albany ends with Speaker Sheldon Silver. It's just not possible to honestly say that there is a way to take the responsibility of this struggle away from Speaker Silver.

Of course we need to put the blame on Speaker Sheldon Silver! We – and we includes Assemblymen Heastie and Wright – need to help Speaker Silver to realize that what he is doing is wrong.

If this is not the issue for the Black and Hispanic community, nor the issue for Speaker Silver, then whose problem is this?

Assemblyman Keith Wright should know at the core of his being that this IS a problem for the Black and Hispanic community. He has to know that the ugly truth is that the proposed district lines are intended to try to kill the civic spirit in Black and Hispanic communities. He has to know in his heart that a goal to alienate the growing Black and Hispanic population is sufficient so that people become apathetic and don't get involved in politics and all sort of civic matters.

We don't want our young professionals and our youth moving out of the communities because no one speaks for them in our communities. We don't want them to feel deprived of their youthful vigor, fresh ideas and ability to become leaders in their communities.

Every single Black and Hispanic elected official has to know that the future of our community, of our youth, of our people is in our hands. We have no right to let this slip away.

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