



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

What You Should Know

RUBEN DIAZ May 29, 2013

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For the Coors Light Beer Company: Any Press is Good Press

Once again, I am stating, for the record, along with Puerto Rican leaders throughout United States to express my outrage against the latest offensive Coors Light Beer ads that are plaguing our community in preparation of the 2013 National Puerto Rican Day Parade. The ads depict beer cans draped the Puerto Rican flag.

You should know that two years ago, I sent an open letter to Coors Light informing them that their beer ad 'Emboricuate' - which means "become Puerto Rican (Borinquen)" promotes a false impression that drinking beer is a central theme in the Puerto Rican culture. I was pleased to see that Coors Light voluntarily discontinued the 2011 'Emboricuate' campaign, and that their ads were promptly replaced by less offensive ads.

I fear that this year, Coors may have decided to use Puerto Rican leaders' protests and fierce rejection of offensive ads to the advantage of their advertising campaign, thinking that any press is good press.

They need to know that the Puerto Rican flag represents our culture. It is ours, and has no place being used as a marketing tool for Coors Light beer or any product that may be considered degrading to our community. We, the Puerto Rican community deserve more respect.

It is well known that some people live by the motto that any press is good press. Right here in New York City, we have Mayoral Candidate Anthony Weiner as a prime example of how that game is played. He knows the equation: protests = free press = free publicity.

Anthony Weiner's negative press has gotten him so much free press and free publicity that he is within 5 points of Christine Quinn's lead, according to the most recent polling figures of potential New York voters.

He and the Coors Light beer company seem to think alike.

My question is: since the Coors Light beer company knows that pushing their 'Emboricuate' campaign in 2011 offended the Puerto Rican community, why are they running new degrading ads that disrespect the Puerto Rican flag and our community as a whole? Does the Coors Light Beer company have anything to gain but free publicity every time someone expresses their outrage? Do they really believe this is how to promote their company or their product?

I remember in 1981 when our community protested the movie Fort Apache The Bronx because of its strong racial stereotype against Black and Hispanic New Yorkers. Thinking back, I can only wonder if our protests fed into the movie's advertising campaign, because

each protest that was covered by the media offered the movie more free press and helped it to become a hit.

It is hard to say what the best approach is for us to take as a community this year, and while I understand that each time we raise our voices, they get free press, I cannot sit back and be silent while the Coors Light Beer company disrespect the Puerto Rican flag in order to gain publicity and raise its revenue."

This is Senator Rev. Ruben Diaz and this is what you should know.