



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

Worst Are Those who Have Eyes That Work and Cannot See

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WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

By Senator Rev. Rubén Díaz

32nd Senatorial District, Bronx County, New York

Tel. 718-991-3161

Worst Are Those who Have Eyes That Work and Cannot See

You should know that election time is right around the corner, and soon enough, you will find volunteers knocking on your doors to collect signatures, and asking for your cooperation to help their candidates qualify to appear on the ballot.

You should know that it is both ironic and frustrating to hear about the negative reception many volunteers experience while knocking on the doors to collect signatures from registered voters.

“I don’t vote.” “No one does anything for me.” “They’re all the same. After getting elected, they forget their community.” Those are some of the complaints and criticisms many volunteers receive – and some volunteers even get doors slammed in their faces. The most interesting irony is when we hear some people claim: “No one does anything for me.”

You should know and understand that the United States of America, our states, and our cities are practically bankrupt. Many people are furious because of the cost of social programs that elected officials have created and implemented and fight to protect when we are elected.

Our nation, state and city have many different social programs that are subsidized by tax dollars to help the needy, for example: public housing, Section 8 vouchers for housing, programs to help drug addicts, programs and recreational centers for senior citizens, programs to help educate and protect immigrants, HIV/AIDS treatment programs, health care for the needy, education programs and services for children, abortion programs, etc. There are programs that provide needs for all kinds of groups: feminists, senior citizens, single mothers, immigrants, homosexuals, battered women, low-income families, runaways, etc.

You should know that these programs to help the needy were created by elected officials from both the Democratic and Republican parties – and you should also know that the struggle to protect and maintain even the least among any of these programs is immense.

Therefore, when I hear people making comments such as “Nobody does anything for me” and “Why should I vote?” I feel like pulling every hair out of my head.

It is important that you, my dear reader, understand that such comments are often made by the very same people who are receiving government-funded benefits.

I have to ask myself: How can someone who receives welfare, lives in public housing, or receives Section 8 vouchers can say: “Politicians do nothing for me.” How can someone who receives food stamps and free medical services say: “Politicians do nothing for me.” How can someone who goes to a recreational center daily and gets free food say: “Politicians do

nothing for me.” How can immigrants and other people who come to this country and never work but receive benefits say: “Politicians do nothing for me.”

You should know that I am totally convinced that even though the United States of America and our cities and states are not perfect - and we still have many problems - I am totally convinced that there is no other country that allows its elected officials to nearly bankrupt their governments just to provide programs for needy people.

The irony of all this is that the same people who receive the benefits offered here in America, are the very same ones who slam the door and curse at the volunteers who go around to collect ballot signatures. It is painful to see that the same people who receive the benefits from the government are the ones who complain and say: “I don’t vote. They do nothing for me.”

If they only realized that the apartment they live in and the food they eat are provided by programs that were created by elected officials, they might be willing to participate in the electoral process. If they only realized that thanks to the fights and struggles of elected officials, many people CAN go to the post office or to the bank once a month to pick up their checks.

You should know that while some people are saying “Nobody does anything for me,” there are people who insist that if those city, state and federal benefits would be cut, there would be a surplus in every budget every year. And there are people doing everything possible to cut those services.

My dear reader, you should know that it is because the elected officials fight hard to protect those services, that people receive benefits from the government.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am reminded of when the Prophet Elisha prayed and said: “Oh Lord, open their eyes and let them see.” 2 Kings 6:16 – and to this I add: because the worst are those who have eyes that work and cannot see.

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