



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

The Dilemma that We Elected Officials Face

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July 22, 2014

What You Should Know

By Senator Rev. Rubén Díaz

32nd Senatorial District

718-991-3161

The Dilemma that We Elected Officials Face

You should know that there are many times in politics when we are faced with especially delicate and sophisticated issues. There are times when our decisions may not hold up to everyone's satisfaction.

You should know that when a person is elected to serve and represent the needs of others, the duties of that elected person often include appointing people to serve alongside them. In political reality, there are certain qualities of potential appointees, aside from professional qualifications, that we must consider: race,

creed, color, and sex – to name a few.

When each elected official knows it is time to make decisions, he or she realizes this must be done with great care. If not, they could be the subject of many attacks and accusations from all kinds of anti- discrimination groups. They could be accused of neglecting to include certain groups and communities.

It is important for you to know that this behavior is followed by every elected official from the President of the United States down. For example, we all know that even though President Barack Obama was elected as the first African American President, it wouldn't look “good” for him or for the Democratic Party to have appointed another African American to serve as the Vice President. They had to find another ethnicity to balance that ticket, and they succeeded when they appointed Joe Biden.

New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo named a qualified Hispanic man, Cesar A. Perales, to serve as his Secretary of State. He also selected a qualified woman, Kathy Hochul, to be his running mate for New York’s Lieutenant Governor. This way, Governor Andrew Cuomo can appear to be inclusive and protect himself from anyone who would try to accuse him of discrimination.

When I became a Member of the New York State Senate, I was also very careful to appoint people from different ethnic groups in my community.

In order to satisfy the diversity of groups throughout the City of New York, the same considerations apply for the Office of the Borough President. For example, since we know that the Brooklyn Borough President is African American, the Staten Island, Queens and Manhattan Borough Presidents are White, and the Bronx Borough President is Hispanic, we can take a look at the ethnicity of each, and appreciate how each carefully they appointed their Deputy Borough Presidents.

We see that Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams meticulously chose a Hispanic woman to serve as his Deputy Borough President. Deputy Borough President Diana Reyna, who is a former Member of the New York City Council, has expertise and qualifications. Eric Adams has not only chosen a qualified person, but he has satisfied many segments of Brooklyn’s population by choosing a Hispanic who is a woman. It would not have looked as good for him if he chose a Jamaican –even though there are very large sections of Brooklyn with Caribbean roots.

Queens Borough President Melinda Katz recognized the great diversity in Queens, and chose a Black man to serve as her Deputy Borough President. Deputy Borough President Leroy Comrie was also a former Member of the New York City Council, and also has expertise and qualifications. The fact that he is a Black man helps to satisfy the demand for the Queens community to have a balanced ticket.

Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer chose a Hispanic man to serve as her Deputy Borough President. By selecting Deputy Borough President Aldrin Rafael Bonilla, she covers herself from being accused of being anti-Hispanic.

Staten Island Borough President James Oddo chose Deputy Borough President Ed Burke to serve on his ticket. This seems to adequately reflect the needs of Staten Island's diversity.

In Bronx County, we are proud that Ruben Diaz, Jr. is our Hispanic representative. He also realized that he could not be insensitive to the diversity of the borough and appoint another Hispanic to serve as his Deputy Borough President. That is not how politics works.

Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. chose the Honorable Aurelia Greene to serve as his Deputy Borough President. Deputy Borough President Aurelia Greene served in the New York State Assembly for 27 years. She is one of the most well-known, experienced, and beloved leaders in Bronx County. By appointing Deputy Borough President Aurelia Greene, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. not only appointed the most dedicated and the best, but he also appointed an African American woman. In politics, this is what is called the perfect choice.

My dear reader, you should also know that when we elected officials have to make decisions about who to hire and who to fire, we have to take many things into consideration. Our decisions can hurt members of other communities just because they each want the best for their own, without regard for the other groups.

Ladies and gentlemen, since many people may not know the real reason for hiring certain individuals, people can make all sorts of accusations about matters that might have nothing at all to do with the actual decision-making. This is what we simply call the dilemma that we elected officials face.

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

