



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

Thank You, Governor Cuomo: It's Better Late than Never

RUBEN DIAZ December 2, 2015

| ISSUE: **ETHICS**

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

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By Senator Rev. Rubén Díaz

District 32 Bronx County, New York

Tel 718-991-3161

Thank You, Governor Cuomo: It's Better Late than Never

You should know that six years ago, in 2009, I introduced a piece of legislation calling for a ban on outside employment for legislators in order to help end corruption in New York State.

At the time, out of 62 Senators, only former Senator Eric Schneirderman was willing to co-sponsor the bill.

You should also know that right after Governor Andrew Cuomo won his election, I made a very public plea on November 12, 2010 to him asking for his support for my bill. In fact, I

wrote a press release titled “[Senator Ruben Diaz Calls on Governor-Elect Cuomo to Support Ban on Legislators’ Outside Income.](#)”

Having received no reply to this very serious matter, a few months later, on January 18, 2011, I sent the Governor yet another passionate and public call for help titled “[Senator Diaz Calls on Governor Cuomo to Support Bill Banning Legislators’ Outside Income.](#)”

This was also ignored.

But surprise, surprise ... now, five years later and after former Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver has been indicted, tried and convicted, Governor Andrew Cuomo says he supports a ban on outside income for legislators.

I have to ask: What took you so long, Mr. Governor? If you would have come out and supported my bill years ago, or even during this past Session, maybe things would be different for Sheldon Silver and other Members of the Legislature who have been or may be indicted.

Nonetheless, it is better late than never, and so once again, I am calling upon Governor Andrew Cuomo to support my legislation and to use all of his power as he has done before, and not to cop out by saying that he does not have enough support.

It is important for my colleagues to realize that as long as we allow legislators to hold outside

business interests, there is a potential that these outside business interests create a conflict of interest, compromising out integrity.

You should know that throughout the years, when this piece of legislation has been reintroduced, its name was changed, but its content did not. It went from S284A, S384A, and most recently, S111. Recently, only two of my 62 colleagues, Senators Adriano Espaillat and George Latimer have joined as co-sponsors.

It is also important for you to know that this past Session, on April 28, 2015, when S111 was (finally) up for consideration in the Standing Committee on Investigations and Government Operations, it was only Senator David Carlucci and I who voted in favor of my bill.

My bill was defeated in Committee by five Senator: Senator Marty Golden, Senator Carl Marcellino, Senator Terrence Murphy, Senator Michael Nozzolio and Senator Thomas O'Mara. Two other Members of that Committee: Senator Brad Hoylman and Senator Daniel Squadron voted without recommendation.

Now Senator Nozzolio who in this past Session voted no, has recently come out in favor of banning outside employment.

For those of my dear readers who think that there is any sentiment to end corruption and call for transparency in Albany and in government, I have to say from my own very real experience with this simple Senate bill: that sentiment is not there.

Nonetheless, I still call upon my colleagues in the Senate to support this bill and to use this week's political news as another wake up call to ban outside employment for New York State Legislators, because it is always better late than never.

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