

October 16, 2009

Hand Delivered

Honorable David A. Paterson  
Governor  
State Capitol  
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Paterson:

Today I received your recommended local assistance reductions for the New York State Office for the Aging.

Your proposed reductions are unconscionable, especially the proposed \$1 million cut to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program which provides funding for meals to the homebound elderly. It is outrageous that you are proposing a funding reduction that will result in taking food out of the mouths of vulnerable elderly residents of New York. You may be interested to know that current waiting lists for home delivered meals is approximately 3,100. Your proposed funding reduction will no doubt, add significantly to this number.

I am especially dismayed that you have taken this approach because as recently as last week, when Lt. Governor Richard Ravitch asked the Legislature for suggestions to close the State's budget gap, I provided him with three bills that I have introduced intended to do just that. I have attached for your reference, the memo, bill text and sponsors' memos that I sent to him.

Additionally, I have also introduced legislation to create the New York State Seniors Trust Fund (S6209). The purpose of this bill is to raise money to pay for the elimination of waiting lists for home delivered meals (S3340C).

Again, let me voice my extreme displeasure over your proposed funding reductions to programs that keep seniors healthy, living in their own homes, and reduce the need for more expensive institutional care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ruben Diaz", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Senator Reverend Rubén Díaz, Sr.

RD:cbs

cc: Press Corps