



# The NiLP Report

on Latino Politics & Policy



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## NYC Comptroller Stringer Meets with Campaign for Fair Latino Representation

By Angelo Falcón (November 13, 2015)

The Campaign for Fair Latino Representation featured a presentation by NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer at their November 12th monthly meeting held in El Barrio in Manhattan. The Comptroller spoke about the diversity challenges facing the City of New York and his efforts to address them through his office, followed by a question and answer session. He reported on his advocacy for greater city contracting with minority and women-owned businesses, increasing the diversity of the financial managers in his oversight of the city's pension funds, his role in promoting the resolution of Puerto Rico's debt crisis, among other issues. He pointed to his special relationship with Puerto Rico, where, as what he calls himself, a "Step-Rican," he has family experiencing the problems the Island's residents face in the current economic crisis there.



Comptroller Stringer emphasized the importance of diversity in the city government work force and decried the underrepresentation of Latinos that currently exists. He explained that he has met several times with the leadership of the Campaign and supported its goals. The Comptroller discussed possible ways his office may be of help in promoting greater Latino employment in the municipal work force, including a possible audit review of the effectiveness of the city's equal employment opportunity (EEO) agencies. He also agreed to work with the Campaign for its development of a Citywide Progressive Latino Policy Agenda for New York and plans to hold follow-up meetings with the group.

The Campaign's Chair, Javier A. Nieves, continued the meeting by congratulating the appointment of attorney Norma Ramos, on her appointment as Deputy Secretary for Civil Rights by Governor Cuomo. He explained that because of this appointment, she will be stepping down as Vice Chair and Coordinating Committee member of the Campaign, although she plans to remain active with the group. He also congratulated Janet Alvarez on her nomination by Mayor de Blasio to one of the positions of part-time commissioner on the NYC Tax Commission. He thanked her for her early leadership of the Campaign.



Nieves pointed out that the current leadership of the Campaign is playing their role with the understanding that they have no interest in seeking employment with the New York City government.

#### **ADDRESSING THE LATINO UNDERREPRESENTATION ISSUE**

Dennis Flores, a member of the Campaign's Coordinating Committee, reported on the group's walkout action from a September 16th meeting with representatives of the de Blasio Administration, which was organized by Marco Carrion, Commissioner of the Mayor's Community Assistant Unit. Explaining that since no one with the full authority to address the Campaign's recommendations at the deputy mayor level was present at this meeting, Campaign leaders Nieves, Norma Ramos and Dennis Flores walked out, leaving a letter for the Mayor restating their call for a meeting to address the problem of Latino underrepresentation in his administration.

In response to the question by Louis Hernandez of 100 Hispanic Men of what the response from the Mayor was, Nieves pointed to some moves by the administration:

- The Mayor's Office of Appointments has hired two Latinos on staff who are focused now on the outreach and recruitment of Latino candidates for appointments;
- The director of the Mayor's Office of Appointments, Rachel Lauter, has agreed to provide the National Institute for Latino Policy (NiLP), the Campaign's technical advisor, a full listing of the Mayor's appointments since he took office, to allow for a more complete analysis of his Latino record in this regard. NiLP and the Campaign have been requesting such a list in more than a year and now may be getting access to it.
- The Mayor has been putting out feelers to third parties about ways that he could repair his relationship with the Campaign. Nieves pointed out that in their September 16th "walkout letter" the Campaign is simply requesting that the Mayor formally respond to The letter and agree to meet.
- Antonio Rivera, Jr., another member of the Campaign's Coordinating Committee, gave a report on his participation in the Somos El Futuro Conference held this last week in Puerto Rico. He discussed the economic problems facing Puerto Rico and the immediate need to create jobs there. He reported that he approached Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr, in Puerto Rico about meeting with the Campaign and that the Borough President agreed to do so.



**Shammeik Barat,  
new Assistant  
Director of  
Mayor's Office of  
Appointments**

#### **THE CAMPAIGN AND THE MEDIA**

Nieves followed with a report on the Campaign's media relations. He began by updating the group on the November 4th meeting with NY1 News/Noticias, which he felt was very successful. The Campaign met with NY1 News Director Dan Jacobson, their Political Editor Bob Hardt, NY1 Noticias Executive Editor Roberto Lacayo, and Assistant News Director Shannon Troetel. Representing the Campaign were Javier A. Nieves, Luis O. Reyes, Norma Ramos and Rev. Sam Cruz. Following the discussion of their concerns over the station's coverage of Latino issues, the Campaign provided NY1 News with a memo containing detailed recommendations that Jacobson agreed to respond to in writing within 10 working days.

Continuing the media relations item, Nieves reported on the Campaign's successful support of the November 4th SNL Dump Trump Rally held at Rockefeller Center. The Campaign, along with a large group of local and national civil rights organizations, endorsed the rally, which delivered petitions with over 522,000 signatures to NBCUniversal and Saturday Night Live. Nieves also went over the strong media coverage that the Campaign has received on the Latino underrepresentation issue, including a front page story in *The Chief* newspaper.



Campaign's Luis O. Reyes at rally

#### TOWARD A PROGRESSIVE LATINO AGENDA

The last part of the meeting focused on the Campaign's initiative to develop a Citywide Progressive Latino Policy Agenda. Nieves explained that the goal is to publish this agenda by February when Mayor de Blasio issues his Second State of the City Address. The Campaign plans to hold local community meetings throughout the city's Latino neighborhoods to inform this agenda and promote a citywide discussion of Latino issues that the de Blasio administration needs to address. These local meetings will culminate in a citywide summit in January or February where this agenda will be ratified.

Nieves explained that members of the Campaign's Coordinating Committee are organizing local Latino policy forums in all five boroughs in November and December and asked anyone interested in helping to develop one in their community to reach out to one of the following facilitators:

- **Bronx:** Andres Torres at [uzibla@aol.com](mailto:uzibla@aol.com)
- **Brooklyn/Staten Island:** Javier A. Nieves at [nievesj38@gmail.com](mailto:nievesj38@gmail.com) or Dennis Flores at [Dennisflores718@gmail.com](mailto:Dennisflores718@gmail.com)
- **Manhattan:** Luis O. Reyes at [luisoreyes@aol.com](mailto:luisoreyes@aol.com) or Antonio Rivera, Jr. at [Tonyrjr@yahoo.com](mailto:Tonyrjr@yahoo.com)
- **Queens:** Jose R. Sanchez at [jose.sanchez@liu.edu](mailto:jose.sanchez@liu.edu)

#### Further information

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