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Washington, and I invited 100 Pastors with me.

EM: What will be your efforts for the aging community now that you are a Senator?

RD: *I sit on the Task Force for the Aging now, and am pushing to bring the community's issues to the Republican Party.*

EM: How has it been working with your son Assemblyman Rubén Díaz Jr. ?

RD: *It isn't only having a son that deals and works with you; it's having a friend, a colleague, and a fellow politician. We consort in everything, we're buddies.*

EM: How has Washington welcomed you?

NYS Senator, Rev. Rubén Díaz with US Senator Hillary Clinton during his visit to the US Congress this past February

RD: When I went to Washington last week, accompanied by the Pastors I invi-ted to the opening prayer, Senator Clinton, Senator Schumer, and the Minority Leaders all showed their support.
[President Bush sent a private lawyer on his behalf to personally welcome Díaz.]

EM: What is your political agenda?

RD: *My main focus is, and has been senior citizens, affordable housing, and recent cuts made to the education budget in New York.*

Senator Díaz has been an active member of his community for over 30 years, a relentless advocate fighting for equality, affordable housing, education, and over-all betterment of the Latino com-

Assemblyman Rubén Díaz, Jr., Democrat, represents the 75th Assembly District of Bronx County, including the neighborhoods of Bronx River, Harding Park, Clason Point, Hunts Point and Soundview. This is an area of the South Bronx that is rich in culture, history and diversity, and poised to become a focal point of economic revitalization.

A twenty-five year old man passionate about community service and empowerment, Díaz was reelected to a second term in the New York State Assembly in 2002. He brings to the New York State Assembly a lifetime record of community service, a sincere commitment to improving the lives of all of the people of his District, the Bronx, and New York State, and an outstanding legislative and constituency services record in his first two-year term.

Assemblyman Díaz was first elected to the NYS Assembly in November 1996. In that key electoral season, Assemblyman Díaz gave his unwavering support to Bronx County's candidates and his winning platform was based on the creation of equitable partnerships between citizens and government.

During his first term in office, Díaz organized a strong staff comprised of individuals with both the skills and the desire to bring substantive citizenry services to the 75th Assembly District. Today, his District Office has become a magnet for 40 to 50 individuals a day who come from all over the South Bronx. With Díaz they are certain to find tireless advocacy, service delivery, and most importantly, an Assembly representative who both listens and responds to the concerns of his community.

Assemblyman Díaz is a member of the New York State Assembly's Standing Committees on Children and Families, Cities, Corrections, Education, Governmental Operations, Technological Advancement and Housing. He is also a member of the New York State Assembly/Senate Puerto Rican and Hispanic Task Force.

Assemblyman Díaz has served as the Chair of the Assembly/Senate Puerto Rican and Hispanic Task Force's Seniors Awareness Day, which provides seniors from around New York State the opportunity to learn about their benefits and entitlements.

EM: What called you to the political arena?

RDJr: *My father did, since the 70's he's opened senior centers throughout the Bronx. He instilled in me from a young age to be involved in the political system, when I was 7 years old he ran for the Senate and lost, now twenty some years later, he sits in the very position he ran for.*

EM: What is your main focus?

RDJr: *Asthma rate, education, affordable housing, technology. Two years ago we opened the first Internet Cafe in the Bronx, [Cyber Casa, 1217 Stratford Avenue] technology is important to this community, and more of it is needed.*

EM: With the Latino population now being the largest in the country, what can we expect from legislation on the local levels?

RDJr: *A lot more people are paying attention. Miguel Estrada is an example [picked for a seat of the federal court of appeals for the District of Columbia. The 40-year-old Estrada is regarded by Washington Republicans as a rising star with the potential to one day sit on the Supreme Court.] He's fighting for more legislation for aliens.*

EM: How has it been working closely with your father?

RDJr: *A fantastic roller coaster ride at times. Sometimes I'm in the middle because we don't see eye to eye on every political issue. He [father] has taught me a lot, he's a dark skinned kinky-haired Puerto Rican that is a strong voice in Washington, he's like the Puerto Rican Al Sharpton.*

EM: How do you think Washington has welcomed your father?

RDJr: *He's always been recognized, he's always had a good rapport. Whenever there is a national issue dealing with the church or the Latino community, my father has always been called upon.* ■

New York State Assemblyman Rubén Díaz Jr., important voice in Albany