

Board of Directors  
National Puerto Rican Day Parade, Inc.  
2804 Third Avenue, Fifth Floor  
Bronx, New York 10455

February 8, 2014

Dear Board Members:

It is with great sadness and a heavy heart that I am writing to officially resign as Chairperson and Board member of the National Puerto Rican Day Parade, Inc., effective immediately.

As you all know, I have dedicated my life to this great organization, volunteering my time for no other reason than to serve my community. I have been involved with the Puerto Rican Day Parade in one capacity or another for almost three decades. The Parade has always been the priority of my life, both personally and professionally. I have taken precious time away from my daughters' lives. I have even buried my mother and then, on the same day, flown back to New York so I could be present to attend to the details of the Gala dinner. I have done this my entire adult life because of the appreciation I have felt from the Puerto Rican community and nothing more.

All I have ever wanted was to help those who did not have the same opportunity as I had to learn about, understand and appreciate our beautiful culture and heritage. The Parade has always been the greatest way to recognize what our ancestors left behind and to help our youngsters understand the importance in continuing that rich legacy.

I am especially saddened, disappointed and betrayed by Carlos Velasquez. I trusted him as a friend and as the marketing agent for the Parade for almost 30 years. I relied on that trust to my and the organization's detriment. I stood by him when the allegations first surfaced, fueled largely by those individuals who claim to be looking out for the best interest of the Parade. These are the same individuals who have never offered any help or assistance to the organization in any capacity. I am sure those same individuals will soon be "claiming" victory, when in reality they will be exposed as the true traitors to the Puerto Rican community, since their main interest in the Parade is to use it as a personal platform for notoriety and "photo ops."

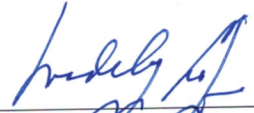
Knowing that this board has never misappropriated any sponsorship monies, and trusting Carlos Velazquez's claims that his hands were clean of any wrongdoing, I continued to stand by him throughout the investigation. It is now apparent, based on the Attorney Generals' findings, that he betrayed me, he betrayed the Board, he betrayed the organization, and most importantly he betrayed the Puerto Rican Community by repeatedly stealing from the cultural icon that is the Parade. Although I always asked and required of him to provide the documentation of the Parade's finances, I accept that as leader of this organization I should have gone further. I should not have trusted him as much. I accept that, but I can forever hold my head high that I have always been transparent. I have never taken a penny from this organization. In fact I have spent an enormous amount of my own personal money through the years, for Parade business. I did that gladly and I would do it all over again. I want to be clear that I do not want to resign, but because of my misplaced trust in Carlos Velasquez, I have been informed by the Attorney General that I have no other choice.

Finally, I am most disappointed with how and why this investigation began, and how the investigation has been handled. This investigation has left you, the hard-working volunteer Board that makes this landmark event possible, with virtually no time, no resources, and a very inexperienced incoming Board with respect to Parade production, in the size and scope that the National Puerto Rican Day Parade requires. In light of the fact that no one within the existing Board, nor I as Chairperson and/or individual, have committed any financial wrongdoing, I have repeatedly asked the Attorney General to allow to me remain on the board guiding you and the incoming Board members at least until the 2014 parade takes place in June. He has refused. I am worried and heartbroken at the prospect of this landmark cultural event not being as grand and magnificent as it could have been, or even worse if it cannot happen at all, due to the way that this investigation has been handled, and has prevented this organization from moving forward.

The Parade is and will be always part of my life. I will always be available if you need assistance, advice or help. But for the benefit of the organization and the continuation of the Puerto Rican Parade, I decided to resign. I did not want this investigation to be dragged through protracted litigation, in light of the fact that the Attorney General wields an enormous amount of power and would wield that power against our small organization. I wish the best to all of you members that remain and to those that will come to serve this great organization.

Finally, as I have always said, "Los veo en la quinta avenida. Que viva Puerto Rico!"

Sincerely and with much respect,



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Madelyn Lugo, Ex Vice-Chairperson  
NPRDP, Inc.