

Speaking out for Cuba

written by Stephen Millies

November 3, 2019



Dr. Damian Suarez, Pat Fry, Emily Thomas, and Tom Gogan.

Cities across the United States are demanding the U.S. government stop its cruel blockade of Cuba. Activists came to the New York City council on Halloween to do the same.

The NYC Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations held a hearing on Oct. 31 on resolution 1092 against the blockade and travel ban. Sponsors of this resolution are Inez Barron, Ydanis Rodriguez, and committee chair Jimmy Van Bramer, all of whom spoke in favor.

Eleven other people spoke in support of the resolution. Gilberto Villa, who was born in Cuba and who has for 60 years been defending the Cuban Revolution, denounced the blockade. So did Brodie Enoch and Emily Thomas, both from the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization / Pastors for Peace.

Cuba Sí NY/NJ coalition member Anne Mitchell spoke on behalf of Rosemari Mealy and Joan Gibbs while Shepard McDaniel of the Universal Zulu Nation spoke on behalf of James Haskins.

Pat Fry spoke representing the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism, and the Alliance for Global Justice. Tom Gogan, a national organizer of U.S. Labor Against the War, and Yhamir Chabur, a Colombian American and member of the Venceremos Brigade, also urged resolution 1092 be passed.

Doctors testify for Cuba

Dr. Sapphire Ahmed and Dr. Damian Suarez urged the City Council to go on record against the blockade and travel ban. Dr. Suarez is a graduate of Latin American School of Medicine in Cuba.

While Trump is trying to strangle Cuba, the Cuban people provided Dr. Damian Suarez and over a hundred other U.S. residents with a free medical education. Harlem, Woodhull and Montifiore hospitals are among the medical centers in New

York City where these Cuban-trained doctors are now practicing.

Yet Cuba's assistance is actually resented by the super rich. In 2005, President Bush refused to let Cuban and Venezuelan doctors and other medical workers help the survivors of Hurricane Katrina. Bush let Black and poor people in New Orleans drown and starve instead.

Michael Leavitt, Bush's Secretary of Health and Human Services, [told the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C.. in December 2008](#) that "health also legitimizes revolutionary socialists... it's not a good thing for the United States to have central American governments dependent upon Cuba" (for health care).

Cuba has what we need: free medical care for all. Urge your local city council or state legislature to pass a resolution denouncing the blockade and travel ban against Cuba.

The writer, a retired Amtrak worker, spoke at the hearing in support of the resolution.

