



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose Peralta

## Senator Jose Peralta Holds Immigration Forum in Elmhurst

JOSE PERALTA April 19, 2017

| ISSUE: **IMMIGRATION, COMMUNITY FORUMS, KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**

State Senator Jose Peralta and experts from several organizations held an immigration forum this morning at P.S. 89 in Elmhurst, in which attendees were informed about their rights, and how to act in the event that anyone has an encounter with Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) agents. This was the fourth immigration forum held by Senator Peralta, as part of efforts to protect immigrants put in place by the Independent Democratic Conference's Immigrant Defense Coalition initiative.

"Sadly, since President Trump landed in Washington D.C., there is an increased threat of deportation for immigrants in my District, and throughout the City and the State. I, and the rest of my colleagues in the IDC, are committed to helping and protecting immigrants. Nothing, and no one, will ever change that," said Senator Peralta. "We all have rights, regardless of our immigration status."

Senator Peralta noted that the IDC's funding for immigrant legal defense services that was negotiated as part of this year's State Budget will help protect New Yorkers. He also discussed his landmark initiative that transformed the Senatorial District 13 into a "Sanctuary District" to assist immigrants in need.

Alongside Senator Peralta, immigration experts participated in the forum and addressed concerns brought up by members of the audience. They were: Carmencita Gutierrez, Director of the Queens County District Attorney's Office of Immigrant Affairs; Kelly Becker-Smith, Immigration Attorney at Emerald Isle Immigration Center; and, Benis Guzman, Attorney at Her Justice.

"My priority is to keep people here where they belong, with their families, and in their neighborhoods," said Senator Peralta. "We are working tirelessly to make sure our immigrant communities stay vibrant. They are the very fabric of our society, a staple of who we are as a city, as a state, as a nation."

The Senator noted that if anyone requires assistance on immigration matters, they are always free to contact his office directly at (718) 205-3881, or they can also call (800) 213-6385, the hotline number established by the IDC's Immigrant Defense Coalition.