



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

## Senator Sanders Convened Faith-Based Community Leaders Gather to Discuss Pressing Issues at St. Camillus-St. Virgilius Parish

JAMES SANDERS JR. February 23, 2024

| ISSUE: **ENVIRONMENT, GRANT FUNDING, AFFORDABLE HOUSING**



A productive dialogue on issues facing the faith-based community took place at St. Camillus-St. Virgilius Parish, bringing together key figures to discuss concerns and potential solutions. The event, which I was fortunate to attend, highlighted the collaborative spirit and commitment to positive change within our community.

The discussions centered around three primary areas:

**1. Housing Assistance:** Recognizing the challenges many faces in securing affordable housing, participants explored the possibility of partnering with Housing Connect to provide on-site assistance to constituents.

**2. Grant Funding:** To empower the faith-based community to access available resources, the possibility of organizing a comprehensive grant-writing seminar was discussed.

**3. Environmental Stewardship:** Recognizing our responsibility towards the environment, the conversation explored strategies for making the church more energy efficient. Gerrard Clark, Energy Efficiency Contractor with Con Edison, shared his expertise in guiding the church towards sustainable practices.

**Gratitude to Key Contributors:**

Sen. Sanders extend sincere gratitude to the following individuals who made this event a success:

**Presenters:**

Lucy Cummings, PhD, Director of Faith Sector Resilience at New York Disaster Interfaith Services (NYDIS)

Gerrard Clark, Energy Efficiency Contractor, Con Edison

**Pastor:**

Rev. Richard Ahlemeyer, St. Camillus-St. Virgilius Parish

**Important Attendees:**

Rev. Rubén Darío Cruz, Vice-President, Treasurer, Latin American Intercultural Alliance

Dr. Douglas Woodall-Wilcox CMHT, Project Manager, Housing Connect, RDRC

Jurate Jones, LMSW, MD, Program Manager, Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens,  
CCNS/Seaside Older Adult Center

Sharon Forde, Health Navigator, Choose Healthy Life

Rev. Edwin A. Robles Jr, English Ministry Pastor, CompTIA A+, Prince of Peace, Pentecostal  
Church

Their dedication to our community and willingness to share their expertise were  
instrumental in fostering meaningful dialogue and paving the way for positive change.

**Looking Forward:**

The discussions at St. Camillus-St. Virgilius Parish shed light on crucial issues and sparked  
promising solutions. With the continued commitment of community leaders and  
organizations, we can work together to build a stronger, more vibrant future for all.