



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

## Senator Kevin Parker Recognizes Nurses' Exceptional Contributions During Nurses Appreciation Week

JAUkia MCCONEYHEAD May 14, 2024

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During Nurses Appreciation Week, which ran from May 6 to May 12, State Senator Kevin Parker demonstrated his steadfast dedication to championing the tireless work of those in the esteemed nursing profession nationwide. Acknowledging their indispensable role in healthcare and the enhancement of patient welfare, Senator Parker took the opportunity to

introduce two pioneering bills. These legislative proposals are designed not only to uphold nurses' rights but also to advance the standard of care and combat the pressing shortages of healthcare professionals in underserved regions.

The first of these bills, the "Safe Staffing for Hospital Care Act," (**S.4681**) represents a pivotal step toward ensuring optimal working conditions and patient safety in healthcare facilities. Recognizing the profound impact of staffing levels on both nursing professionals and the individuals they serve, this legislation establishes minimum staffing requirements for workers across various healthcare settings. By mandating the submission of staffing plans and prohibiting most mandatory overtime practices, the Safe Staffing for Hospital Care Act seeks to prioritize the well-being of both nurses and patients alike.

"Nurses are the cornerstone of our healthcare system, providing compassionate care and support to patients in their times of greatest need," said Senator Parker. "Yet, chronic understaffing poses significant challenges to their ability to deliver safe and effective care. Through this legislation, we can ensure that nurses have the resources and support they need to fulfill their vital role in our healthcare system."

The second piece of legislation being championed by Senator Parker aims to establish the nurse loan repayment program (**S.7142**). This bill addresses the pressing need to attract and retain qualified nurses in underserved areas and nursing homes where access to healthcare services is often limited. By establishing a nurse loan repayment program and authorizing the commissioner to award loan repayment awards, this legislation aims to incentivize

nurses to serve in areas with the greatest need thereby improving access to quality care for vulnerable populations.

Nurses play a pivotal role in ensuring access to quality healthcare for all individuals regardless of their circumstances. Yet, far too often, they face barriers to practicing in underserved areas, exacerbating disparities in access to care. The nurse loan repayment program represents a meaningful investment in addressing these disparities and expanding access to care for underserved communities.

"Nurses are the frontline heroes who provide compassionate care and comfort to patients during their most vulnerable moments," said Senator Parker. "As we celebrate Nurses Appreciation Week, let us express our deepest gratitude to these dedicated professionals who exemplify the highest standards of integrity, compassion, and professionalism. Their unwavering commitment to healing and humanity inspires us all."

Senator Parker's steadfast advocacy for nurses serves as a beacon of support and gratitude for their dedication, compassion, and resilience. Through the introduction of these two transformative bills, Senator Parker is taking concrete steps to empower nurses, improve patient outcomes, and strengthen our healthcare system for generations to come.

**About State Senator Kevin Parker**

Senator Kevin S. Parker is intimately familiar with the needs of his ethnically diverse Brooklyn district comprising sections of Flatbush, East Flatbush, Kensington, Ditmas Park, Midwood, Flatlands, Canarsie, Georgetown, Old Mill Basin, Mill Basin, Marine Park, and Bergen Beach. A lifelong Brooklyn resident, he is the Chairman of the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee and sits on the Senate Finance; Rules; Banks; Internet and Technology; Rules; and Budget and Revenue.