



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Malcolm Smith

Stay Alert: Serial Rapists On The Prowl In Queens, Community Leaders And Elected Officials Warn Neighbors

MALCOLM A. SMITH July 31, 2008

Operation SAFE enacted in Southeast Queens

(Queens, NY) – Senate Democratic Leader Malcolm A. Smith (D – St. Albans), neighborhood watch groups, civic leaders and elected officials are putting the word out for women and children in southeast Queens to be aware of sexual predators on the loose.

Community leaders are encouraging residents to report any suspicious activity to police. During the past nine months, there have been 12 attacks – four rapes and eight sodomies. Authorities have DNA from the suspects but the police don't have a match yet. Almost all of the attacks occur at night. There is a \$12,000 reward posted for anyone that has information leading to the capture of the suspects.

"While local law enforcement officials have increased patrols and are protecting the neighborhoods in southeast Queens, residents need to be aware that there are violent sexual predators who have committed several attacks in our community," Senator Smith warned his neighbors. "Most of these attacks have occurred at bus stops. For everyone's protection bus drivers and passengers need to stay alert and be aware of their surroundings at all times."

Senator Smith is calling for a three-prong approach to apprehend these predators: "Local clergy need to make announcements during Sunday services in an effort to heighten community awareness among parishioners, Police Commissioner Ray Kelly needs to beef up patrols to capture these predators within the next week and I am encouraging residents to take pictures with a camera phone of any suspicious activity as well as send text messages to a reliable person."

This is not the first time such a series of crimes have occurred. Four years ago, a 30-year-old serial rapist, already serving a long sentence for a series of sexual assaults in the Bronx, pleaded guilty to four additional Queens attacks. A Bronx jury convicted the man in August of raping nine women, including three schoolgirls, over a 10-year period. The man was connected to the Queens attacks through DNA evidence, officials said.

The Rev. Floyd Flake, pastor of the Greater Allen Cathedral said: "In this time of community distress, I am encouraged that so many community leaders, elected officials and law enforcement officials have banded together to catch this predator preying on innocent women and children in the neighborhoods of southeast Queens.

State Senator Smith said that by "working together we will extinguish this blight on society."

"We will catch this criminal and put him behind bars where he belongs," Smith said. "We've conquered this challenge before and we will conquer it again."