



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose Peralta

Senator Jose R. Peralta Announces \$50,000 in Funding to District Attorney's Office and Safe Horizon to Combat Domestic Violence

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(QUEENS, NY) - October 7, 2010 - New York State Senator Jose R. Peralta was joined by the District Attorney Richard Brown and Safe Horizon's CEO Ariel Zwang to announce \$50,000 in funding for domestic violence programs and initiatives in Queens. Senator Peralta has joined forces with the DA and Safe Horizon to address this insidious crime on the city and state level.

At the press conference, Peralta was also joined by members of the clergy to announce a new Domestic Violence partnership that he is launching with the clergy community in the 13th district. Peralta will bring together religious leaders at a breakfast on October 14th to discuss domestic violence and the devastating effect it has on our communities, families and congregations throughout Queens. Representatives from New York State Office for Prevention of Domestic Violence, Queens District Attorney's Office, New York City Family Justice Center, Safe Horizon and Legal Aid Society will provide presentations and discussions about DV prevention, resources and counseling for families and the need for community involvement.

Queens District Attorney Richard Brown said, "I would like to thank Senator Peralta for his dedication and continuing support of my office in providing the necessary resources to get the job done. The Queens Child Advocacy Center offers comprehensive services to child victims of physical and sexual abuse and their families. In housing a myriad of investigative, social, medical and prosecutorial agencies under one roof, child victims are protected from having to repeatedly tell

their stories of abuse. The Center has proven to be successful in aiding child victims and the funding provided today will ensure that we will be able to provide the necessary staffing to help provide justice for these youngsters. Likewise, today's funding will also aid us in maintaining the appropriate staffing levels needed to ensure that our Domestic Violence Bureau continues in its mission to help break the cycle of violence that affects so many families across our county while enhancing the quality of justice that domestic violence victims receive here in Queens."

"I am grateful to Senator Peralta for his leadership, his compassion and his commitment in the area of domestic violence. The Senator's funding will bolster our ability to provide immediate, expert care to victims and their families seeking practical assistance and safety assessments in the Queens Family Justice Center. This program is designed to help victims of domestic violence access a wide array of services – from crisis intervention to immigration law to housing assistance – in one facility. This funding will also help support our children's centers located in the borough's courthouses, which provide free childcare to youngsters whose caregivers are otherwise engaged in lengthy and often contentious court proceedings. Safe Horizon is proud to stand with Senator Peralta and D.A. Brown to help victims of domestic violence move from crisis to confidence," said Ariel Zwang, CEO of Safe Horizon.

During the course of this year's legislative session, the Senate Peralta and the Democratic Majority passed a package of 12 bills to address the causes and effects of domestic violence in New York. These bills will significantly enhance domestic violence survivors' safety, improve state services available, and strengthen penalties against those who inflict the pain of domestic violence on others. Measures included in the Majority's legislation:

- o Increase penalties for witness tampering and repeat offenders of orders of protection.
- o Prohibit housing and employment discrimination of a survivor based on the violence they may have endured.
- o Protect survivors' identities from leaking to the public, or found via FOIL request.
- o Ease the process of courts and law enforcement officials issuing orders of protection.

In New York State approximately 400,000 domestic incidents are reported to police departments. Moreover, 20-percent of total assaults outside New York City in 2008 were committed by “intimate partners.”

NYS Senator Peralta said, “Domestic Violence is called the crime of silence. We must all be at the forefront on speaking out about Domestic Violence. While it is true that females are the victims in most instances of abuse, the effects of domestic violence are felt throughout every segment of our society. Children are particularly vulnerable to the damage caused by domestic abuse, and males who are brought up in abusive households are more likely to batter their own wives and children. I am committed to finding solutions to break the cycle of domestic violence in our community.”