



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruth Hassell-Thompson

## Statement From Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson on National Black Hiv/aids Awareness Day

RUTH HASSELL-THOMPSON February 7, 2011

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“In the midst of ongoing state budget negotiations and health care cuts, we are reminded today on this, the 11th National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, that Black-Americans continue to have the highest rates of HIV infection in the state and nation.

“Blacks make up just 14 percent of the U.S. population, yet account for almost half of those living with HIV/AIDS in this country.

“As we pause to reflect on the lives touched by, and lost to, this disease let us also renew our resolve to do whatever is necessary in ending this epidemic. Each of us must play our part in this fight.

“The fact remains that HIV infections, in most instances, are completely preventable. We each have a personal responsibility to protect ourselves and our loved ones, get the facts about HIV/AIDS, get tested regularly, and speak out against the homophobia and stigma which hinders an honest and open discussion. Every person and every action counts.”