



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose Peralta

Senator Peralta and The Doe Fund Team Up To Keep Play Street Clean and Safe This Summer

JOSE PERALTA April 26, 2011

With the prospect of litter and garbage—and the vermin they could attract—threatening a beloved summer play area in a community with limited open spaces for children, concerned Jackson Heights parents turned to State Senator Jose Peralta for help.

“It was a no-brainer: I called The Doe Fund,” said Senator Peralta, who has secured several grants over the years for the nonprofit and its flagship Ready, Willing & Able program, through which 150 miles of New York City streets and sidewalks are cleaned by the “Men in Blue.”

With the Parks Department's attendant position for the Play Street adjacent to Travers Park slated to be eliminated, local parents feared the impact the budget cut would have on the beloved play area, one of a very few in a community in need of open areas for recreation.

“We thank Senator Peralta for his leadership,” said Dudley Stewart, president of the Jackson Height Green Alliance. “This additional support will help to make sure that the 78th Street Play Street is consistently clean and safe for our community. We look forward to continue working closely with him to expand open space in our area.”

The Play Street is 78th Street, between Northern Boulevard and 34th Avenue. It will be closed to traffic from July 1 through September 30.

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“I’m proud of this community’s partnership with The Doe Fund and the work that the ‘Men In Blue’ do for us,” said Senator Peralta. “At a time when budget cuts threatened the quality of one of the few open spaces the children of our community have, The Doe Fund answered the call.”

Participants in The Doe Fund’s flagship Ready, Willing & Able program— known affectionately as the “Men in Blue”—can be seen each day in their signature bright-blue uniforms cleaning New York City streets and sidewalks. All once homeless or incarcerated, they are paid above the minimum wage for this transitional employment that represents the core of the program, and is accompanied by a comprehensive service and training package. They graduate from the program with full-time, permanent employment, independent housing, and their sobriety, returning to their families as responsible fathers and to their communities as role models.