



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

SENATOR KEVIN PARKER July 1, 2018

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Dear Neighbor,

Mental illness can affect anyone regardless of race, color, gender, sexuality, or ability. However, an individual's particular background can make access to mental health treatment much more difficult. Established in 2008 and celebrated every July, National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month promotes local, regional, and national initiatives that encourage Americans like you to become informed about mental illness and to take action to mitigate its effects and the broader health disparities that exist. According to the Substance

Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, mental illness affects one in five adults and one in 10 children in America. Mental illness is a leading cause of disability, yet nearly two-thirds of people with a diagnosable mental illness do not seek treatment. As reported by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, minorities often are less likely to receive diagnosis and treatment for mental illness, have less access to and availability of mental health services, and receive poorer quality mental health care.

This July, we encourage you to reflect on the lives of those touched by mental illness and to tackle its ongoing challenges, including the lack of quality and affordable health care coverage and the cultural stigma surrounding mental illness.

I wish you a Happy National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month! Thank you for your anticipated efforts in helping us spread the word through awareness, support, and advocacy.

Yours in Service,

Kevin Parker