

News From the  
**New York State  
Senate Majority Leader**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**STATEMENT FROM SENATE MAJORITY LEADER  
MALCOLM A. SMITH RE: OBAMA INAUGURATION**

"Nearly one hundred and fifty years since Abraham Lincoln declared all people, regardless of race, to be free citizens and just 50 years since our country recognized that separate is never equal and segregation can never be tolerated, Barack Obama was sworn in as our nation's first African American President. Never before has America's future been so bright. Not just because we have elected a brilliant, compassionate and effective leader, but because his ascendancy to our nation's highest office is proof that race doesn't matter and the station in life to which you are born into isn't where you have to remain if you are willing to work hard and dream big.

Our country's greatest strength, its most prized asset has always been the potential of its people to rise up and achieve heights that were incomprehensible by those who lived only a generation before. It is our ability to change with the times that makes us great and as the first African American President of the New York State Senate I understand the significance of change and the motivation that can be drawn from people banding together to do what hasn't been done before.

For people of all races, genders and religions, President Obama's journey is an inspiration, a testament to our ability to break down barriers and meet whatever challenges come before us. Whether it's reviving a faltering economy, restoring America's standing on the international stage, improving access to quality and affordable health care, rebuilding our educational system or making our planet cleaner and safer, we can take solace in the fact that in President Obama we have a leader who believes there is no goal beyond our reach and no limit to our capacity to change the world.

As a husband, father and elected representative of the people of New York I pray for President Obama to succeed in leading our nation in a new direction. I am confident that President Obama will cast aside the issues that divide us and harness the full potential of the American spirit to accomplish that which government is sworn to do- make tomorrow better than today."

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