**For Immediate Release**

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**Senator Parker passes legislation protecting**

**victims of domestic violence**

(Albany, NY) Yesterday, June 16th, Senator Kevin Parker (D21-Brooklyn), passed legislation extending new protections to victims of domestic violence. “Under the old law, victims of domestic violence who had escaped their batterers and wanted to get an unlisted telephone number were forced to pay a monthly fee,” said Senator Parker. “Thanks to this legislation and the support of telecommunications companies like Verizon, domestic violence survivors will now for the first time be able to get unlisted numbers or anonymous numbers without charge.”

In New York, domestic violence is reaching epidemic proportions. Each year, approximately 400,000 domestic violence incidents are reported to police departments; intimate partner homicides have increased 25% statewide and 45% in counties outside the City of New York.

Senator Parker’s legislation, Senate bill S.5615, provides that for domestic violence victims who have had a permanent order of protection issued, telephone companies and cable companies providing telephone service shall provide without charge non-published telephone listings or anonymized listings for the duration of the order of protection. Additionally, the State’s Office for Prevention of Domestic Violence, Office of Children and Family Services, and the Department of Public Service shall study the number of victims needing this new protection, and the economic impact of providing the service upon the telephone and cable industries.

 “For more than a decade the legislature was unable to pass this bill, while hundreds of thousands of victims of domestic violence have gone without the added protections created by my legislation,” said Senator Parker. “I am profoundly grateful that at long last, we are able to provide additional security for those New Yorkers who deeply deserve it.”

“Verizon applauds the sponsors for advancing this proposal, which will allow victims of domestic violence to obtain an unlisted telephone number or an alternative listing free of any charge,” said Jim Gerace, president of Verizon’s New York Region.  “The unique opportunity  -- which is in keeping with Verizon's support of initiatives to help victims of domestic violence -- to obtain an alternative listing is particularly important given the popularity of companies  that  make a living of trying to locate people who do not want to be found.  An alternative listing can combat efforts like this.  As a result, a victim of domestic violence will have a greater peace of mind knowing that an alternative listing will be available beyond the order of protection period.”

 **About Senator Parker**

Senator Parker represents Brooklyn’s 21st Senate District, which encompasses Flatbush, East Flatbush, Kensington, Ditmas Park, Midwood and Borough Park. Senator Kevin Parker is an outspoken advocate for the 311,000 constituents he serves. Since his election into the Senate in 2002, Senator Parker has remained committed to fighting for equal rights for all, ensuring that his diverse district obtains the necessary resources to help grow and sustain small businesses, higher education, and highlighting HIV/AIDS awareness.

Senator Parker is the Majority Whip & serves on several Senate committees, including Codes; Commerce, Economic Development and Small Business; Energy and Telecommunications; Finance, and the New American Task Force. Having solid roots in Central Brooklyn, and having lived and gone to junior and high schools in his district, Sen. Parker’s commitment to the lives of his neighbors and constituents is his primary objective. Not only does Sen. Parker have the distinction of being the youngest African American elected into the state senate, he has also been recognized for his commitment to public service with the Legislative Leadership award.

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