

FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE SENATOR KEVIN PARKER

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Statement from Senator Kevin Parker Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire

“On this day 100 years ago New York faced one of its most prolific industrial disasters. One hundred forty-six immigrant women were killed when a fire swept through the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. What was most shocking was the discovery that the managers of the shirtwaist factory had ultimately condemned their vulnerable employees to death sentences by locking the doors to the stairwells and exits in order to prevent them from taking cigarette breaks during their shifts. This resulted in many of the employees being unable to escape and so of the one hundred and forty six that perished, sixty two persons jumped to their deaths as witnesses looked on unable to help. Attitudes to safety were drastically altered and from the ashes of this horrific event emerged the American Society of Safety Engineers.”

“What remains imperative is that the people of the State of New York remember and acknowledge the importance of this tragedy in the context of American history. That is why I introduced Senate Bill No. 1819 creating a commission to plan and execute an organized series of Triangle Shirtwaist Fire educational and tourism events. The Triangle Shirtwaist Commission will make sure that the important lessons learned from this tragedy - in particular relating to the plight of immigrants, the labor movement and women's rights - will never be forgotten. This tragedy is representative of the need to acknowledge the past in order to effectively deal with the challenges of the future.”

About Senator Kevin Parker

Senator Kevin S. Parker is committed to restoring the overall quality of life for the constituents of the 21st Senatorial District in Brooklyn. A lifelong Brooklyn resident, Senator Parker has been a Flatbush resident for more than 30 years. Having been nurtured, schooled and employed in the district, Senator Parker is intimately familiar with the needs of ethnically diverse community that consists of 311,000 constituents in several communities that include: Flatbush, East Flatbush, Midwood, Ditmas Park, Kensington and Borough Park.

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