



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John L. Sampson

Senate Majority Conference Leader John L. Sampson Announces Formation Of Special Committee Of Inquiry

JOHN L. SAMPSON October 20, 2009

(**New York, NY**)- Senate Majority Conference Leader John L. Sampson announced the formation of a special committee of inquiry to investigate the conduct for which Senator Hiram Monserrate was convicted by the State Supreme Court of Queens County.

The Committee will examine precedent, Senate Rules, and all relevant law to establish the proper procedures and identify the remedies available to the Senate. The Committee will also conduct an expeditious review of the facts and relevant evidence, as well as the potential options available under applicable law to respond to this matter. Following the completion of its investigation, the committee will report back to the Senate with its recommendations.

The Committee will be composed of nine members, consisting of five Democrats and four Republicans, and will be chaired by Senator Eric Schneiderman. Majority Conference Members on the committee include Senators Ruth Hassell-Thompson, Diane Savino, Toby Ann Stavisky, and Andrea Stewart-Cousins. The Minority Conference has agreed to participate in the proceedings and is expected to submit their committee appointees shortly.

"Violence against women is a serious crime which must be viewed with the utmost concern and is simply unacceptable to everyone in a just and safe society," said Senate Majority Conference Leader John L. Sampson. "A court has now ruled, and now the Senate will examine the action we can take as a body. We have a lot of work ahead of us – and important issues to resolve in the Senate. Establishing this bi-partisan committee is the proper step we must take to protect the institution of the Senate and the rights of each member."

"We will take all steps necessary to ensure that the special committee conducts a thorough inquiry into the facts of this case. I am committed to providing a full and fair hearing," said Senator Eric Schneiderman, Chair of the Special Committee of Inquiry.

"My colleagues and I take this situation, and this charge very seriously. Our committee will conduct a deliberate and thoughtful review of all of the information relating to this case, the laws of our state and the rules of our Chamber as we determine an appropriate recommendation to the full Senate," said Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson.

"The other members of this committee and I will move with all due diligence to examine the circumstances of this particular case and make a recommendation to the Senate as quickly as possible," said Senator Diane J. Savino.

"We are navigating in uncharted waters. It is important that we establish a process that is fair, just and comprehensive," said Senator Toby Ann Stavisky.

"Violence in our society affects us all, and we need to get this right and ensure that a fair and just process remains the legacy of this committee. Our members understand the gravity of task before us, and I know that we will work diligently in the days and weeks ahead to establish due process. I thank Senator Sampson for his leadership and his trust in us to do the right thing," said Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins.