



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

## Senator Parker Calls for Marriage Equality Bill Vote

KEVIN S. PARKER November 2, 2009

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**FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE SENATOR KEVIN PARKER**

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### **SENATOR PARKER CALLS FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY BILL VOTE**

*Brooklyn Lawmaker Urges Senate Leadership to Enact Same Sex Marital Privileges*

**Brooklyn, NY-** Pledging to push for true equality for same sex couples, Senator Kevin Parker (D-21) today urged the Senate Majority Conference that the Marriage Equality Bill(S.4401) be brought to the New York Senate floor for a vote during the special session on November 10, 2009.

The bill originally authored by Manhattan Senator Thomas Duane was first co-sponsored by the Brooklyn Lawmaker Parker. The bill provides same-sex couples the same opportunity to enter into civil marriages as opposite-sex couples and that no member of the clergy may be compelled to perform any marriage ceremony. If signed, the bill will require additional state expenditures for spousal benefits for those partners of state employees who are not eligible for such benefits under current law.

“It is imperative that this legislation is passed as numerous same-sex couples grapple with the psychological and economic strain of not having all their civil and equal rights,” said Senator Parker. “The inability for same sex couples to marry causes them to experience deprivation in areas such as healthcare, pension benefits, tax incentives, etc. The NYS Assembly has already acted to correct this injustice and now it is time for the Senate to do the same. By denying marriage equality, the state is denying them those rights. This is a matter of simple fairness.”

Senator Parker compares the treatment towards same sex couples to other historically marginalized group – African-Americans, Native Americans, Jews, and women in a letter written to both and Senate President Pro Temp Senator Malcolm Smith and Senate Majority Conference Leader John Sampson. As the support continues to grow for marriage equality Parker argues same sex couples should be afforded the same opportunities and privileges offered to traditional couples.

The legislation has drawn strong support from a broad range of community organizations, Empire PRIDE; Committee on LGBT Rights; New Yorkers for Marriage Equality, a coalition of community groups that pushes for social, economic, environmental, racial and civil justice. Senator Parker hope that this year the bill might make it to a committee vote, and vowed to continue to support the legislation and educate legislators and others about the necessity of passing it.

“The reality is that there are still many people in New York who don’t agree with us on this issue. But there have also been people who wouldn’t accept interracial marriage, and that didn’t mean that banning it would be right for society either. It’s rarely easy or quick to put an end to any kind of discrimination and that is why I call for this bill to come to the floor for a vote,” said Senator Parker

## **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 27 years. Having been nurtured, schooled and employed in the district, Senator Parker is intimately familiar with the needs of this ethnically diverse community that consists of 311,000 constituents in several communities which include: Flatbush, East Flatbush, Midwood, Ditmars Park, Kensington and Borough Park.

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