



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Stephen M. Saland

Statement by Senator Saland on the Expulsion of Hiram Monserrate

STEPHEN M. SALAND February 9, 2010

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Today, the Senate voted to expel Hiram Monserrate as a member of the New York State Senate. It is unfortunate that the Senate was compelled to take this action as a result of Hiram Monserrate's assault upon his girlfriend, Ms. Giraldo. The crime committed was an act of domestic violence and our vote today sends a clear message that domestic violence cannot and should not be tolerated. As a member of the Senate, Mr. Monserrate's actions and conviction demonstrated that he is unfit to continue to serve as a member of the State Senate. His conduct was compounded by his refusal to cooperate with the Select Committee of the Senate charged with investigating the facts and circumstances surrounding the conviction of Hiram Monserrate on October 15, 2009.

In its conclusion and recommendations, the select committee relied on the legislative intent of the Family Protection and Domestic Violence Intervention Act of 1994 which I wrote and successfully negotiated into law. In referencing the 1994 Act, the report cites there are few more prevalent and serious problems confronting the families and households of New York than domestic violence. The Act further notes the corrosive effect of domestic violence is far reaching affecting people of all ages, race, religion, ethnic, educational and socio-economic groups and the integrity of New York's families is undermined by a permissive or casual attitude towards violence between household members.

The Senate's actions today reflect the Legislature's zero tolerance position toward domestic violence as stated by the Family Protection and Domestic Violence Act. While I am saddened that Mr. Monserrate's conduct has compromised the integrity of the office he was elected to serve, it is reassuring that the vast majority of my colleagues, regardless of party affiliation, believe that Mr. Monserrate's behavior warranted expulsion. Clearly, a message has been delivered that domestic violence is abhorrent and anyone assaulting a member of their family or household is not fit to serve as a member of the State Senate.