



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

Serrano, Advocates, and Community March to End Violence in El Barrio

JOSÉ M. SERRANO May 27, 2010

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(East Harlem, NY)- Senator José M. Serrano, the East Harlem Community and other local elected officials held a march today protesting the rise in violence that has occurred in this culturally rich and diverse neighborhood, most recently the stabbing of three people on May 26th.

"Today we are united in raising our voices for this community," said Senator Serrano, who was unable to attend the march due to budget negotiations in Albany. "However, the work

does not end when the march concludes. We must all continue working to get at the root of violent crime- and to stop it before it begins. This means supporting quality education and lowering student drop-out rates. It means supporting clean and safe affordable housing, giving our community a real vested interest in our neighborhoods. This means supporting after-school programs that give our kids a real alternative to the streets while providing much needed educational support. This also means summer jobs for our youth, which will give them the training and skills they'll need to compete in a global economy."

Local elected officials and community organizations have been working closely with the police department to raise awareness and devise solutions to reduce the crime taking place among the youth of East Harlem. The march, which took place on Lexington Avenue from 114th Street to 104th Street, was organized in response to the community's concern regarding the violent acts that have plagued East Harlem in recent months.

"We appreciate the foresight and leadership of Senator Serrano for planning this Peace March," stated Congressman Charles B. Rangel. "It is imperative to raise awareness about violence and work collectively to bring about solutions to this problem for the East Harlem community and our City."

Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer said, "I'm joining with law enforcement officials and community leaders today in a united show of force against crime in New York City. The three seemingly random stabbings in East Harlem this week underscore the need for immediate action. Like many New Yorkers, I am alarmed by the rise in murders and gun violence around the City, particularly incidents involving youth and gang activity. That's why we're out here pounding the pavement in El Barrio to send a clear message: we will not allow the City to revert to the bad old days of the 1970's."

"The rise in violence among our youth is a reality we can no longer ignore," said Council Member Melissa Mark-Viverito. "We are coming together as a community to give our youth positive outlets where they can be challenged and supported. I am marching today not only to denounce these acts of violence but also to listen to our young people and provide them with alternatives to this behavior before it's too late."

"We will work with the NYPD to stop the senseless violence and hope to bring our community back together," said Cesar M. Vasquez, President of the 23rd Precinct Community Council.

Lillian Lebron Miranda, Director of Development for the Violence Intervention Program, Inc. said, "The Violence Intervention Program, Inc. founded in 1984 in the heart of East Harlem has been a witness to how intimate violence destroys generations of women, children and families, particularly in the Latino community. NO MAS ABUSO! It is time for our communities to come together and make a concerted effort to bring light to a pervasive, often overlooked social crisis and ensure safety and security for women and families."

As part of the ongoing work to reduce crime in East Harlem, advocates and elected officials will organize a series of events aimed to educate the community regarding violence prevention. The first of these local events will take place on June 3rd when the 23rd Precinct, in collaboration with the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, will hold an educational workshop for parents on identifying gang activity.