



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Malcolm Smith

Senators Malcolm A. Smith, Neil D. Breslin and the Rev. Al Sharpton Join Forces WITH Community and Civic Leaders to Announce Operation Snug “Don’t Shoot New York” Anti-Violence Rally

MALCOLM A. SMITH February 22, 2011

| ISSUE: **CRIME**

(Albany, NY)- New York State Senators Malcolm A. Smith (D- St. Albans) and Neil D. Breslin (D-Delmar) were joined by the Rev. Al Sharpton to stand with community and civic leaders to announce the “Don’t Shoot New York” anti-violence march and rally to be held in New York City on February 27th. The march and rally will be presented by Operation SNUG, a statewide anti-gun violence initiative designed to save lives and create safer communities by decreasing shootings and killings in the communities across New York State with disproportionately high rates of gun violence.

March participants will assemble at 2:30 p.m., at the United Nations on First Avenue and 42nd Street in New York City. They will then march from the United Nations Plaza to Times Square at Broadway and 42nd Street. The march will begin promptly at 3 p.m.

Senator Smith said, “Gun violence affects us all - white or black, rich or poor. Illegal guns terrorize neighborhoods and tear apart families. For too long, the deadly specter of illegal guns has gone unchecked. Our children are dying at the hands of gun violence, but through our commitment to SNUG, we can put a stop to that deadly trend now and return our streets to their rightful owners, the people of New York.”

“Operation SNUG aims to make a personal appeal to those in crime-ridden neighborhoods, seeing the personal avenue as the most effective way to stop community violence,” explained **Senator Breslin**. “Right here in Albany, SNUG uses former criminals on the streets to personally promote nonviolence. People who at one time were on the violent side are now coming back to the most troubled neighborhoods to show that there are other options in life. Engaging the community in this effort to curb violence is a very successful strategy.”

There are 10 Operation SNUG programs across New York State: **Operation SNUG Albany**- University of Albany School of Social Welfare / Trinity Alliance; **Operation SNUG Buffalo**- Community Action Organization of Erie County; **Operation SNUG Brooklyn** - Man Up!; **Operation SNUG Harlem** - New York City Mission Society; **Operation SNUG Mt. Vernon** - Ujamaa Community Development Corp.; **Operation SNUG Niagara Falls**- People and Possibilities; **Operation SNUG Queens** - King of Kings Foundation; **Operation SNUG Rochester** : Pathways to Peace; **Operation SNUG Syracuse**- New Justice Services and **Operation SNUG Yonkers** - Yonkers YMCA.

Just last week in Queens, a young woman was shot and killed after a fight broke out at a party. The increase of shootings within the last several months has residents concerned over the health and safety of the community.

Lance and Todd Feurtado, Co-Founders of the King of King Foundations said: “We Believe that Operation SNUG truly gives us the opportunity not only to reduce, but to stop the killings of our young people. It opens the door for us to spend that one-on-one time and to help them realize that life does not start on a street corner, and it should not end there!!”

Robin Holmes, Project Director of Operation SNUG Harlem said: “ Illegal guns are plaguing our communities. It is time for us as a people to step up and do our part to end senseless acts of gun violence immediately. ”

Lisa Good, Project Director of Operation SNUG Albany said: “It is a public health imperative for our children that they should be free of violence. The public, mothers and fathers who reside in our neighborhoods expect this. The implementation of the research-based Chicago Ceasefire Model in New York provides hope and courage that we are all standing together to send a message that violence has no place in the cities of NY.”

Don't Shoot New York March and Rally Co-Sponsors include: National Action Network, My Community and Us City-Wide Clergy Initiative; Guy R. Brewer Democratic Club; NYS Conference of Black Senators, NYS Black Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus; NYC Council Black, Latino and Asian Caucus; New York Hotel Trades Council; Harlem Mothers SAVES; Harlem Clergy and Community Leaders Coalition; The Yonkers Violence and Gang Coalition; Rockaway Development & Revitalization Corp., Life Camp Inc., The Suber Foundation; Street Corner Resources, St. Ann's Anti-Violence Coalition; Hip Hop Stand Up! & Vote; SUV Coalition; United Federation of Teachers; Local 1199 SEIU; Jamaica branch NAACP, Clergy United for Community Empowerment and the Hip Hop Summit Youth Council.

Senator Smith, the march organizer, cited the Arizona shooting of U.S. Representative Gabrielle Giffords as demonstrating the need for Operation SNUG to be expanded throughout the state and the country. Senator Smith and other advocates are also pushing for the expansion of existing gun buy-back programs which have been extremely successful here in New York to become a part of the nationwide SNUG anti-violence initiative.

The SNUG “Don't Shoot New York” rally organizers cited New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's proposed gun control program as an excellent national model to eliminate illegal guns.

Another pertinent program that needs to be re-visited to curb gun violence is the process of micro-stamping in which lasers are used to make tiny engravings on internal mechanisms so that when a gun is fired, information identifying the make, model and serial number will be stamped onto the cartridge.

“New technology such as micro-stamping can help curb gun violence by helping law enforcement officials identify a gun used in a shooting and the possible shooter,” **Smith** said. “The police are doing their jobs but they need help. They need witnesses to come forward and they need this advanced technology to rid our communities of violence which starts with removing illegal guns from the streets. If you see something, say something. If you don't want to call your local precinct, than call your local SNUG office.”

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Malcolm A. Smith is the New York State Senate Immediate Past President Pro Tempore (2008-10). He currently serves as Secretary of the NYS Democratic Conference and ranking member on the Banking Committee.

