



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruth Hassell-Thompson

## Senator Hassell-Thompson Urges all New Yorkers to Commemorate National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 10-16, 2011

RUTH HASSELL-THOMPSON April 12, 2011

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National Crime Victims' Rights Week is a time to reflect upon the lives that have been tragically cut short or forever impaired due to the horrific nature of a crime. It is just one week throughout the year in which we are asked to devote a moment or two to honor the lives and memories of those who were victims of crime. This year's theme of "Reshaping the Future, Honoring the Past," asks that we take a critical and unbiased look at our justice system and evaluate how it has thus far served its citizens.

"For the survivors of the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks on our nation to the families of more than 15,000 homicide victims who lost their lives in 2009, this is a week that pays homage to their suffering and loss," said Senator Hassell-Thompson. "This is also a week to let our voices be heard and say, 'We have not forgotten you,' to the more than 15 million children in this nation who live in households where domestic violence has occurred."

For more than forty years, New York State has committed itself to assisting the innocent victims of violent crime. Since 1966, the Crime Victims Compensation Board, now named the Office of Victim Services (OVS), has provided compensation, funded direct services to crime victims and advocated for the rights and benefits of all innocent victims of crime.

However, there is still much more work to be done. Victims' rights vary greatly from one state to another and many victims are not aware of all of their rights. National Crime Victims' Rights Week provides us with an opportunity to help those who are victims of crime. Some ways we can do this include:

- Enforce current victims' rights laws
- Reach out to underserved victims
- Support crime victims in your community

For more information, visit <http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/ncvrw/>.