



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruth Hassell-Thompson

Domestic Violence Women's Rights and Criminal Justice Advocates to Hold Press Conference about Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act in Albany on June 5th

RUTH HASSELL-THOMPSON June 4, 2013

| ISSUE: **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

What:

Over 100 advocates from across the state will join in Albany on Wednesday, June 5th to lobby legislators to enact the Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act (A.4314-B and S.3337-B), which would establish more compassionate sentencing for survivors convicted of crimes directly related to the abuse they suffered.

Who:

A press conference and lobby day is being organized by the [Correctional Association of New York](#) (the CA), a nonprofit policy-advocacy group working to create a more fair and humane criminal justice system, and the Coalition for Women Prisoners, a statewide alliance of over 1,800 individuals and 100 organizations dedicated to making the criminal justice system more responsive to the needs and rights of women.

Speakers will include:

Tamar Kraft-Stolar, Director of the [Women in Prison Project](#) at the Correctional Association of New York

Jesenia Santana, Supervisor of Client Advocacy Services and Senior Policy Advisor, [STEPS to End Family Violence](#)

Elizabeth Bliss, Project Specialist, the [New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#)

Roli Wendorf, Legal Advocacy Fund Vice President, the [American Association of University Women – NYS Chapter](#)

Lisa Hofflich, Chairperson, [NYS Public Affairs Committee of the Junior League](#)

Lady K. and Kim D., formerly incarcerated survivors of domestic violence

Co-prime bill sponsor **Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson** (D-Mount Vernon), Ranking Minority Member of the Judiciary and Crime Victims, Crime and Corrections Committees, and Senate Minority Conference Vice Chairwoman

Co-prime bill sponsor **Senator Greg Ball** (R-Putnam), Chair of the Veterans, Homeland Security, and Military Affairs Committee

Senator Jeffrey Klein (D-Bronx), Senate Co-Leader and President Pro Tempore and Independent Democratic Conference Leader

Assembly bill sponsor Speaker pro tempore **Jeffrion Aubry** (D-Queens)

Why:

Sending survivors of domestic violence who act to protect themselves to prison for long sentences is incompatible with modern notions of fairness and humanity. Establishing alternative sentencing for domestic violence survivors will make it less likely that survivors will be victimized by the very system that should help protect them. Public opinion is firmly in support of this issue, and speakers at the conference will urge legislators to listen to the

thousands of people from across the state calling for the passage of this bill. A sign of the promising prospects for the bill's success this year, the Act has picked up support from leaders of the Independent Democratic Caucus Senator Jeffrey Klein (D-Bronx) and Senator Diane Savino (D-Staten Island), and from Senator Greg Ball (R-Putnam) who joins Senate sponsor Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson (D-Mount Vernon) as a co-prime sponsor of the Act.

Who Should Attend:

Anyone interested in protecting the rights of women and domestic violence survivors;
Albany-area reporters and journalists

When:

Wednesday, June 5 at 10:30am

Where:

The LCA room of the Legislative Office Building, Albany, NY