



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

## Senator Serrano Rolls Out #Nyspeakup, Domestic Violence Awareness Social Media Campaign

JOSÉ M. SERRANO October 1, 2015

| ISSUE: **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

### **For Immediate Release:**

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### **SENATOR SERRANO ROLLS OUT #NYSPEAKUP,**

### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN**

Serrano Joins with the NYC Office To Combat Domestic Violence, Local Advocacy Organizations and NYS Elected Officials to Raise Awareness for Domestic Violence Awareness Month

(New York, NY)- Senator José M. Serrano today announced that with the help of local domestic violence organizations and fellow New York State elected officials, he would be launching the **#NYSpeakUp** social media campaign for National Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October.

Every day in October, Senator Serrano will be posting facts, stories, articles, and resources relating to domestic violence across social media. All of these posts will use the hashtag **#NYSpeakUp**. The Senator is encouraging everyone who is affected or knows someone affected by domestic violence to add to the conversation online by using the hashtag. These posts will be an effort to spark a conversation and shed light on an issue that too often goes unmentioned.

**“We have a responsibility to address the unfortunate reality of domestic violence and assist domestic violence survivors as they move forward with their lives,”** Senator Serrano said. **“Often times victims of domestic violence are afraid to speak up and feel alone in their struggle. In fact, only an estimated 25% of all female domestic violence assaults are reported to the police. It is my hope that we can**

**harness the power of social media to give a voice to those that are suffering in silence. By speaking up, we can show our friends, family members, and neighbors that they are not alone and that there are resources available to them.”**

Domestic Violence accounted for more than 25% of reported physical assault cases in New York State during 2012. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 70% of domestic violence incidents go unreported. Survivors of domestic violence often suffer more than just physical injuries, survivors are often faced with mental and emotional trauma. Children who witness violence in the home, including its aftermath, can suffer severe emotional and developmental challenges that are similar to those who have been abused directly.

“The Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence (OCDV) applauds Senator Serrano’s #NYSpeakUp campaign, which not only helps draw attention to Domestic Violence Awareness Month, but also helps disseminate crucial resources and information to victims of domestic violence, their supporters and advocates. Since the start of Mayor de Blasio’s administration two years ago, intimate-partner homicides have fallen by 25% in New York City. So much of this is due to awareness. We at OCDV thank Senator Serrano for being a strong voice and an active participant in the campaign to end domestic violence in our City. He is a true UpStander,” said **Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence (OCDV) Commissioner, Rosemonde Pierre-Louis**.

“The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence is about zero tolerance in ensuring that those who commit domestic violence are held accountable – we are asking the nation to take a stand and bring awareness and ensure safety for all impacted by Domestic Violence,” said **National Coalition Against Domestic Violence’s Executive Director, Ruth M. Glenn**.

“1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men will be a victim of domestic violence in their lifetime. Chance are that you know someone who’s been affected. Yet you may not know they are suffering as silence is domestic violence’s greatest ally. At Safe Horizon, we know that part of ending violence is removing the stigma that surrounds it. By speaking out and raising awareness we can let victims know they are not alone and can go to organizations like Safe Horizon for the support they need,” said **Safe Horizon’s Vice President of Government Affairs, Michael Polenberg**.

"The scourge of domestic violence is a black mark on our State and our society, one that is far too often unreported and unacknowledged. That’s why it’s so important that we shed a bright light not only on this widespread problem, but also on the resources and tools available to prevent violence and help survivors. Thank you to Senator Serrano and my colleagues for raising their voices during this National Domestic Violence Awareness Month," said **Senator Liz Krueger**.

“I know all too well that domestic abuse often goes unreported. It’s essential that we take this opportunity during Domestic Violence Awareness Month to speak frankly and openly about a crime that will affect more than 1 in 4 women during the course of their lives. That's why I'm the proud sponsor of legislation that would ensure that domestic violence complaints filed by non-English speakers be translated by law enforcement. I applaud Senator Serrano for helping to continue this important conversation and hope to work with him to protect all victims of abuse,” said **Senator Brad Hoylman**.

“As a society, we cannot remain silent against domestic violence. Together, we can send a clear message that this type of violent behavior is unacceptable and that survivors of domestic violence are not alone. I

am proud to join State Senator Serrano in launching the #NYSpeakUP campaign in an effort to raise awareness and work together as New Yorkers to put an end to the devastating effects of domestic violence in our communities,” said **Senator Gustavo Rivera**.

"It is critical that we do all that we can to shine a light on domestic violence, to assure survivors that we will stand by them," said **Assemblywoman Linda B. Rosenthal**. "I look forward to working with Senator Serrano and my colleagues to support survivors of domestic violence by continuing to raise awareness."

“Domestic violence is a major concern for so many in the Bronx and New York. One-in-four women will experience domestic violence and nearly 3 million men face physical assaults, which makes it an issue for everyone and all families,” said **Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner**. “This past year, I passed legislation to help ease access for victims of domestic violence to electronically file temporary orders of protection and eliminate obstacles in these very dangerous situations, but more work needs to be done in order to raise awareness. We can improve the overall safety and well-being for all New Yorkers, which is why I stand with Senator José M. Serrano, and my colleagues, in support of the #NYSpeakUp campaign.”

“Domestic violence can happen to anyone, regardless of age, gender, race or sexual orientation,” said **Assemblywoman Rebecca Seawright**. “Unfortunately, most instances of domestic violence are never reported due to stigma or fear. It is so important that we, as legislators, create both physical and psychological safe havens for victims. #NYSpeakUp facilitates public conversation that no victim should be made to feel responsible for the domestic violence that they experienced.”

“It is important that we send a strong message of support to victims of domestic violence,” said **Assemblymember Victor Pichardo**. “You are not alone in this fight; there are resources to help you and people who can assist you in overcoming this private struggle. I applaud Senator Serrano’s efforts in bringing much needed awareness to this incredibly important issue.”

“Domestic violence is a problem that spans through all age groups, income brackets, and ethnicities. Raising awareness and giving victims a voice is essential to combating domestic violence,” said **Assemblymember Robert Rodriguez**.

"Domestic violence is a sad reality for far too many New Yorkers. Remaining silent is no longer an option. By speaking publicly about this issue, we can remove the stigma and encourage domestic violence survivors to reach out to the many organizations and resources available to help them. It is time to show these valued members of our communities that we will no longer ignore their pain. I am proud to speak up for those who are unable to," said **Assemblymember Dan Quart**.

**“Whether victims are female, male, children, members of the LGBTQ community or undocumented immigrants, we must show ALL victims of domestic violence that they are not alone and help is available,”** Senator Serrano said. **“It starts with awareness in our communities and a willingness to reach out to friends, family, and neighbors to let them know that help is available and that they don’t have to go it alone. Together, we can speak up about this terrible public health epidemic.”**

For more information and resources to combat domestic violence, please visit:

<http://www.opdv.ny.gov/index.html>

<http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/index.html>

<http://nyscasa.org/>

<http://www.nsvrc.org/>

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