



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pedro Espada Jr.

Alleged Police Brutality

PEDRO ESPADA, JR. January 22, 2010

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I saw the video of Jonathan Baez crying out, helpless in handcuffs, his head smashed repeatedly into the pavement by someone who swore to protect us.

I applaud Commissioner Kelly's swift decision to suspend those two officers without pay and to launch a full investigation, including looking at the supervising officers. I have always supported the police force, and will continue to do so. We need them in the Bronx.

But we don't need them behaving like this. And let me be clear - most of them don't. But we can't have even one officer behave like this.

I imagine the people of the Bronx are as shaken and outraged by this incident as I am. Our communities already have too much violence, and we have been working in concert with the police to lower crime, lower drug trafficking, and keep our neighborhoods safe.

But when even just one police officer begins to behave like a criminal, no one feels safe anymore. I know the Commissioner understands that. Anyone watching that video is going to wonder how many other incidents like that happen when there's no camera around. An incident like this has far-reaching consequences, well beyond the people involved. It impacts how people feel about the police in general. A victim might hesitate to call the police. An informant might hesitate to cooperate with them. A youth might turn away from a police

role model.

I am fully confident in Commissioner Kelly to get to the bottom of this, and I am happy to help in any way that I can. Meanwhile, I encourage the people of the Bronx to continue to have faith in our police and justice system. Only by working together can we achieve safe, peaceful communities.