



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## This Memorial Day Weekend

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS May 25, 2015



"Memorial Day is an opportunity for all of us to pause and reflect on the loss of the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country in the Armed Forces. We honor them for their courage and commitment to protect us. We grieve with New York families who have lost a loved one in the military.

New York was the first state to recognize the holiday in 1873. Memorial Day was originally known as Decoration Day, a name taken from the act of decorating the graves of fallen soldiers. Its history dates back to 1865 and Charleston, South Carolina, where former black

slaves dug up a mass grave of Union soldiers in a Confederate prison camp in order to give them a proper burial and to honor them for fighting so that they became freedmen.

On this solemn and important day in our collective history, let us stand together in saluting our fallen heroes and remembering those who have died in defense of freedom."