



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## World Aids Day Statement

KEVIN S. PARKER December 1, 2017

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Since 1988 December 1 has been designated as World AIDS Day as a way to draw awareness about the disease and mourn the 35 million people who have died from it. In the ensuing years focus was placed on issues affecting the millions worldwide who are living with HIV/AIDS. As such in some years issues like testing, prevention, treatment, education, research and even stigma and prejudice were addressed. But with the advances in treatment and prevention, HIV/AIDS no longer generate the headlines it once did. However the fact is that according to the Centers for Disease Control an estimated 37,600 Americans became

infected with the virus in 2014. Of that number African-Americans -- who accounted for 45 percent of all new infections -- were one of the most gravely affected population segment. This and several other indicators point to the fact that Blacks are still being disproportionately affected by the disease. Therefore, on this World AIDS day I rekindle the call reminding people to take personal responsibility and get tested. World AIDS Day provides an ideal opportunity to do so or at the very least schedule a test.

Finally, though we have made tremendous progress in the fight against AIDS, we must continue to use all tools at our disposal. That means casting off the ideological shackles so that we can have prophylactic education, funding research, affordable and accessible healthcare, and supportive services for those living with the disease.

Today, I join with millions around the world in recognizing World AIDS Day and renewing our pledge to end the epidemic once and for all and hopefully see its eradication in our lifetime.