



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jesse Hamilton

Roundtable on Diversity and Inclusion in Cultural Institutions

JESSE HAMILTON April 6, 2018

| ISSUE: **ARTS, CULTURAL DIVERSITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, ARTS AND CULTURE**



We stand at a crossroads. We honor the lives of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Saheed Vassell, one killed 50 years ago this week, one killed just this week. Our Jewish brothers and sisters are celebrating Passover, which shows how a group can incorporate a discussion of slavery regularly for millennia. We recognize the 400 years of African-American history on this continent. And we are here right now to create a City where our African-American brothers and sisters, our Latino brothers and sisters, our Asian, First Nation, all our underrepresented communities can take leadership in the arts world.

My goal here is to take proactive steps to ensure representation of people from all our communities in these institutions are acknowledged, respected, recognized and fully integrated, through legislation, leadership, accountability, aggressive recruitment, community involvement, cultural equity and stewardship. Our cultural differences are not deficits; they are assets, to our communities, neighborhoods, institutions, educational systems, the world at large and most importantly our youth.

I have been working to raise the accomplishments of all our communities through introducing legislation to require their inclusion in the New York school system. We have been working through my initiative called “The Campus” to bring the best in computer coding, robotics, wellness, and community engagement to neighborhoods that usually get neglected.

Our Roundtable has important themes in common with legislation I announce today to create the 400 Years of African-American History Commission. My proposal would create a New York State commission to highlight contributions of Africans, African Americans, and the African diaspora since the 1619 arrival of Africans in North America. I want to foster partnerships across the state to encourage our educational, cultural, and civic institutions to participate in recognizing the significance of these 400 years. That can mean speakers series, that can mean traveling exhibits, that can mean publications or symposia. Like this Roundtable, I believe we can be a catalyst for change.

There is a lot we can do together. We have a chance to work with the arts community to combine our efforts and to increase communication and cooperation. Everyone in this room is dedicated to giving our communities’ youth agency in our society. We can work together to better utilize our collective efforts, so I am asking for your help to create concrete steps. We need to find ways to work together in new ways.

Let's use this opportunity to create real change.

2017-S8076

- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Establishes the 400 Years of African-American History Commission

March 26, 2018

In Senate Committee [Finance](#)

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Do you support this bill?

2017-S5454A

- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Relates to African American history and achievement

March 29, 2017

In Assembly Committee

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Do you support this bill?