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PRESS STATEMENT

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Hiram Monserrate Should Step Down Monserrate Arrest on Charges of Stabbing

“Senator-elect Hiram Monserrate should never see the inside of the New York State Senate,” said Sonia Ossorio, President of the National Organization for Women in New York City. “He cannot serve the people as he should with these charges pending against him. His focus will not be on creating a better community, but on trying to keep himself out of jail. New Yorkers deserve better, especially women who trust our leaders to protect them and the young Latino men who need positive role models.”

At 4:30am on December 19, 2008, Monserrate, a Queens Democrat and former police officer and marine who was elected to the State Senate last month, was arrested and charged with second degree assault in connection with a serious injury to a 30-year-old woman believed to be his girlfriend. The woman received 20 to 40 stitches for deep lacerations on her face that were “in or around her left eye,” according to law enforcement.

“This case is playing out as so many domestic violence cases do, the one charged with the crime says the stabbing was an accident and the person who was injured refuses to cooperate with prosecutors,” said Ossorio. “Regardless of whether he ends up with a felony conviction or a misdemeanor, he is unfit to hold office.”

“A lot of attention is being given to Monserrate and his political future, what about the woman?” Ossorio said. “No one expects to get stabbed in the face after having a fight with her boyfriend. To have this serious injury, and the stress and pressure of the media glare and of a police investigation, it’s a lot to deal with. I hope she has the support and protection she needs to help her through this difficult time in her life.”