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**STATEMENT BY SENATOR KEVIN PARKER - RANKING DEMOCRATIC MEMEBER
ON THE SENATE ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

RE: CUOMO'S BROADBAND STATEWIDE INITIATIVE

"PARKER SAYS INITIATIVE WILL HELP TO BRIDGE DIGITAL DIVIDE"

State regulators have approved the Time Warner Cable and Charter Communications merger with the condition that the companies improve and expand broadband Internet access for cable customer's statewide, particularly in underserved and low-income communities.

In a statement, New York State Senator Kevin Parker (D-Brooklyn), the ranking Democrat on the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee, said:

"These initiatives will help to bridge the digital divide for tens of thousands of low-income New Yorkers, and provide significant speed upgrades for residents across New York State."

"I applaud Governor Cuomo for making these game-changing investments in our communities. They will ensure that unprecedented access to a world-class communications infrastructure is afforded to every household and business in every corner of our great State."

"It will also provide more affordable high-speed broadband for 700,000 low-income households, as well as free connections to 50 community centers such as our schools and libraries across the State."

"It is my hope that this much needed initiative will help New Yorkers stay connected, share information more readily, and learn valuable computer skills, but more importantly, the Governor's effort positions every New Yorker to better compete and flourish in today's global electronic society."

"There is still much ahead and I am eager to work with the Governor this legislative session on initiatives and progressive policies that will improve the quality of life of all New Yorkers. Especially when the initiatives target marginalized communities to help them prosper and grow."

The merger conditions further require that Charter offer high speed broadband to 145,000 un-served customers who currently have no high speed broadband at all, and requires broadband speeds to double for more than two million customers by 2018 - and increase six-fold by 2020. The one billion dollar initiative also includes more affordable high-speed plans that will be offered to low-income consumers, and free connection and service will be offered to underserved community centers.

Additionally, the state issued a \$500 million solicitation for private sector partners to join the NY Broadband Program, which will invest in delivering high-speed Internet throughout the State - focusing on un-served and underserved areas. The program will deliver access to high-speed Internet to every New Yorker by the end of 2018.

About State Senator Kevin Parker

Senator Kevin S. Parker, a lifelong Brooklyn resident, is intimately familiar with the needs of his ethnically diverse Brooklyn community that consists of 318,000 residents in the Flatbush, East Flatbush, Midwood, Ditmas Park, Kensington, Windsor Terrace, and Park Slope sections of Brooklyn. He is the Ranking Democratic Member of the Senate Committees on Energy and Telecommunications, and Alcoholism and Substance Abuse. He serves on the Senate Committees on Banks, Higher Education, Rules, Insurance, Finance, and Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation. Senator Parker is the Assistant Democratic Leader for Intergovernmental Affairs for the Senate Democratic Conference, and Chair of the Democratic Task Force on New Americans.

For more information on Senator Parker, please visit www.nysenate.gov/senators/kevin-s-parker