



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo Supports Health Insurance and Benefits Measure for Retirees of Nyc Off-Track Betting Corporation

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Bill Restores Health Insurance Benefits; Passes Both Houses of Legislature and Awaits Governor's Decision to Make Law

Queens, NY, June 27, 2011 – NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr., (D-Queens), a member of the Senate's Racing, Gaming & Wagering Committee, commended the Senate for bringing to the floor a vote on requiring the State of New York to maintain the health insurance and supplemental benefits received by retirees of the New York City Off-Track Betting Corporation (NYC OTB) (S.4489/Rules). The bill notes that after the closure of NYC OTB on December 7, 2010, employees who had retired from the corporation were assured they and their dependents would receive health insurance and supplemental benefit coverage under their collective bargaining representative's welfare benefit program. However, those benefits ceased upon closure of NYC OTB.

According to Addabbo, the State breaking a promise to supply benefits to retired NYC OTB employees and their dependents was one of the many reasons why he voted in favor of this bill and helped sought its passage. "With the Senate's commitment to provide health insurance and supplemental benefits to retirees of NYC OTB, the State is reaffirming its commitment to provide due benefits and recognition to former workers and families of NYC OTB. No one should have to endure financial hardships and choose which benefits to leave behind," said Addabbo.

Former employees received supplemental benefits such as prescription drugs, optical and dental insurance through welfare fund benefit plans funded through employer contributions. Upon benefits ceasing to exist with the closure of NYC OTB, retirees were left to determine which prior benefits they could attain without employer contributions. Addabbo notes it was illogical how benefits ceased to exist with plans in place to continue funding of benefits for retirees. “This bill is long overdue, and I am proud to stand with my Senate colleagues to provide for all present and future retirees the entitlement of benefits from any city-authorized health insurance or welfare benefit program,” he explained.

Under the proposed measure, the State will reimburse the city or its designee for the actual cost of benefits. The bill currently awaits signage into law by the governor after passing both houses of the Legislature on June 22, 2011.

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