



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo Wants Counterfeits to Go to Good Cause

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO February 9, 2012

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### **Griffo: Don't Destroy Merchandise, Help The Poor Instead**

(Marcy, NY) - With the needs of people across the region hitting unprecedented levels, and government funding no longer being able to be spread as widely as in the past, Senator Joseph A. Griffo has proposed an innovative idea that can help needy individuals have access to clothes and boots.

Griffo highlighted the need for his legislation at the New York State Police substation in Marcy, where thousands upon thousands of dollars worth of usable clothing is scheduled to be destroyed because it was confiscated as “trademark counterfeit merchandise.”

“I fully support those laws that punish infringement of copyrights and trademarks,” Griffo said. “However, it bothers me deeply to see those who are in need, desperate for clothing while we are destroying serviceable items that could and should have a use.”

To allow this to happen, Griffo developed legislation under which, confiscated counterfeit items could actually help someone in need. Once the products have been altered to ensure that they are marked as imitation and found to be safe, they could be donated to nonprofit organizations who could then distribute the merchandise to persons living in poverty.

“To me this is an exercise in common sense,” Griffo said. “People who are desperate for warm shoes and coats are not going to care if the counterfeit brand name has been obliterated. They simply want to be warm. Many organizations work very hard to find clothes for those in need; it makes far more sense to use clothes that already exist to meet some of the most urgent needs and focus other resources on other needs. In practical terms, this would impact a small sliver of the stream of confiscated goods, but it will make a huge difference to the men and women we can help.”