



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## Addabbo Supports Package of Bills Designed to Honor Deceased Servicemen & Servicewomen

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR May 23, 2012

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*Urges All New Yorkers to Honor Our Country's Fallen*

*Servicemen and Servicewomen on Memorial Day*

**Queens, NY, May 23, 2012** -- As Memorial Day approaches, providing our nation with the opportunity to reflect on the sacrifices of fallen servicemen and servicewomen, **NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.** (D-Queens) reiterated his strong support for a package of legislation designed to honor the memories of deceased New York veterans who gave of themselves in service to their country.

Addabbo, who serves as the ranking Democratic member of the Senate Standing Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs, said, "Memorial Day offers a time for all of us to pay tribute to the veterans, both in battles past and in more recent conflicts, who have made the ultimate sacrifice on our behalf. Without their courage, their valor, and their complete willingness to put their love of country over and above their own safety, we would not be enjoying the precious freedoms we are enjoying today as New Yorkers and as Americans."

In addition to recognizing Memorial Day with honorary parades, tributes, and moments of reflection, Addabbo said that he will continue working in the State Senate to pass legislation honoring the sacrifices of New York's deceased servicemen and servicewomen. "On Memorial Day and every day, we have an obligation to demonstrate how much we appreciate and honor their service and selflessness," said the Queens lawmaker.

The bills that Addabbo recently voted to approve are:

**S.1504:** Co-sponsored by Addabbo, this legislation would prohibit the unauthorized sale of veterans' commemorative property at cemeteries, and put strict regulations in place to govern the sale or transfer of these items – including flag holders, statues, and grave markers. "There have been instances where cemetery owners have sold these items, aware of their value and historical significance, when they should stay right where they are – on the gravesites of the veterans," Addabbo said, noting that this has been particularly common with regard to Civil War memorabilia.

**S.1431:** This bill would authorize the Adjutant General to present a United States flag to the families of deceased New York Guard members for their burial ceremonies even if these veterans were not activated and called to serve abroad – the current requirement to receive a flag. “Even if they were not called into service overseas, New York Guard members have voluntarily made themselves available at times of need and stand ready to serve at a moment’s notice,” Addabbo said. “Their dedication to their country, every single day, should be honored under any circumstances.”

**S.1728:** This legislation specifically creates the crime of desecrating the gravesite of a veteran, punishable as a Class E felony. “Cemetery desecration is heinous under any circumstances, but is particularly despicable when criminals choose to vandalize the graves of veterans who put their lives at risk for our freedoms and liberties,” Addabbo said.

The first two bills, having passed the Senate, are now being reviewed by the Assembly Committee on Veterans’ Affairs. The third bill is under consideration by the Assembly Codes Committee.

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