



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo Bill Punishing Those Who Falsely Solicit Donations, Gifts or Other Property Is Approved by Full Senate

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR June 18, 2013

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Queens, NY, June 18, 2013 -- NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. (D-Queens) is pleased that legislation (S.3740) he sponsors and brought to his attention by a constituent, to crack down on people who defraud the public by pretending to collect donations on behalf of charitable and other organizations, has been approved by the full State Senate.

“There is something particularly devious and despicable about criminals who attempt to greedily line their own pockets by pretending to be collecting money, gifts or other property for humanitarian causes,” said Addabbo. “They set out to pluck at the public’s heartstrings and prey on goodhearted people who truly do want to help others in need.”

Under the legislation, those who falsely represent that they are collecting monetary donations, gifts or other property to benefit an organization would be guilty of a class A misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or a prison sentence of up to one year. The scammers wouldn’t even need to collect the property – they would just need to be caught misrepresenting themselves as a charity, business, government agency or other entity for their own gain.

“One of the worst things about this kind of chicanery is that legitimate charitable organizations sometimes end up with an undeserved black eye,” said Addabbo. “Several years ago, the New York State Police Benevolent Association (PBA) was identified as a scam during the holiday season by the State Attorney General’s office when crooks called the public claiming to be the fundraising arm of the New York State Troopers and attempted to obtain personal information like debit and credit card numbers. The real PBA had to put out a statement to make it clear that this group never solicits donations by phone.”

Addabbo noted that this issue was brought to his attention by a constituent who was almost taken in by one of these schemes. “Unfortunately, this kind of scam is all too common, which makes it clear that the perpetrators simply aren’t afraid of being caught,” said the Queens lawmaker. “Maybe the prospect of a

year in jail and a hefty fine will make these criminals think twice before they reach out to other New Yorkers asking for donations that will never in fact do anyone in real need any good.”

Now that it has passed the State Senate, the legislation is now under review by the Assembly Codes Committee.

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