



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## Nursing Students Discuss New Legislation WITH State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR March 21, 2014

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**Middle Village, NY, March 21, 2014** – Nursing students from Long Island University sat down with State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. to express their support for new, patient-related legislation and to ask the senator to be their “voice to the health care industry.”

“Just as elected officials are, nurses are a type of public servant. It is my pleasure to hear out a fellow public servant,” Senator Addabbo said. “It’s important for those in the healthcare industry to feel confident in their work, sometimes in actual life-or-death situations.”

The Safe Patient Handling Act, a bill of which Senator Addabbo is a co-sponsor, would amend the public health law and the education law to create a safe patient handling policy for all health care facilities across

the state.

The bill includes using the latest technology to assist patients with movement. The current method of manual lifting can cause patients fear, anxiety and discomfort. It also increases the chance of slips, falls and drops, and manual lifting can also give patients skin tears or bruising. The safe patient handling program will improve safety and comfort and give employees and patients greater satisfaction and security in their care.

Safe Patient Handling Committees will also be put in place to assist with compliance and training requirements of the statewide policy.

“We want safety for our patients, and we want to protect the nurses,” said student Ifeyinwa Nnajiofor. “We need equipment and we need the elected officials to put up a policy for training.”

The act additionally calls for an 11-member New York State Safe Patient Handling Task Force within the Department of Health, requires a report identifying the patient handling elements and allows recommendations to be sent to the Commissioner of Health. The commissioner, in consultation with the task force, must then make rules and regulations available to all health care facilities.

“I co-sponsored this bill along with several others related to the healthcare field because it’s imperative we prioritize the people and the facilities taking care of us when we’re at our weakest,” Senator Addabbo said. “The Safe Patient Handling Act would add an entirely new element to medical care – an element that has perhaps been missing until now.”

The Senator also discussed with the students an alternative proposal to nurse-patient ratios being promoted by hospital executives, using a program called Optilink. Under Optilink, a real-time assessment of the needs of a patient are considered as a staffing factor.