



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## **State Will Commemorate Queens County St. Patrick's Day Parade 40th Anniversary in Rockaway Following Resolution Passed by NYS Senate, Authored by Addabbo**

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March 4, 2015

**Queens, NY (March 4, 2015)** – Calling it “a great way to honor our Irish-American residents and a long-standing Rockaway tradition,” **State Senator Joseph Addabbo, Jr.** applauded the recent State Senate passage of a Resolution he sponsored and wrote to commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Queens County St. Patrick's Day Parade, slated for March 7<sup>th</sup> in Rockaway Beach.

In the Resolution, Addabbo noted the Queens County St. Patrick's Day Parade and Cultural Committee has been the driving force behind the renowned event for four decades, and is to be congratulated for its continuing efforts to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and the rich Irish-American heritage.

Speaking in the Senate Chambers on the Resolution, **Addabbo** said, “This parade is a Rockaway tradition, held in an area once known as ‘The Irish Riviera.’ It is the product of a great deal of hard work and dedication from a group known as the Queens County St. Patrick's Day Parade and Cultural Committee, led by my good friend Mike Benn.

“The Queens County St. Patrick's Day Parade is an extraordinary event, attracting more than 50,000 people. It is a celebration and a testament to the Irish heritage of so many Rockaway residents. The zip code 11697, comprised of Breezy Point and Rockaway Point, has been dubbed America's top Irish neighborhood, with 54.3 percent of its

residents of Irish ancestry. Rockaway accounts for one of the largest areas of Irish population in the country.

“Apart from being home to so many people of Irish descent, the Rockaway Peninsula is a resilient community that has seen far more than its share of challenges in recent years. On September 11, 2001, 77 Rockaway residents died, many of them first responders, and two months later, American Airlines Flight 587 crashed in Belle Harbor, killing everyone aboard and five people on the ground.

“Then in October of 2012, of course, the Rockaway Peninsula drew much of the brunt and devastation of Hurricane Sandy. Lives were lost in the storm, more than 100 homes in Breezy Point burned to the ground, many other residences and businesses were devastated, and the recovery process and rebuilding continues today and will continue for the foreseeable future.

“The St. Patrick’s Day Parade we are celebrating today in its 40<sup>th</sup> year is an appropriate symbol of the Rockaway Peninsula and its resilient spirit. In good times and tragic times, this community and its people keep marching forward – one foot in front of another, always moving towards the future.”

**Addabbo** concluded his statements in the Senate by congratulating the Parade Committee, its Grand Marshal Stephen Cassidy, Honorary Marshal John Dunleavy, and all of the Deputy Grand Marshals being honored this year.

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