



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo Votes to Raise Penalties for Offenders Who Grope and Grind Against Innocent Passengers in Public Transportation

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR June 2, 2015

| ISSUE: **CRIME**

Queens, NY (June 1, 2015): NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. recently joined with his Senate colleagues in approving legislation (S.3243) that would crack down on criminals on public transportation who grope and grind against other passengers in a sexual manner. The bill would raise penalties for this type of abominable behavior from a misdemeanor to a much more serious felony charge.

“Many mass transit riders, and most particularly women, have been subjected to this kind of offensive sexual behavior where a creep pushes up against them in a crowded subway car, making sure they can’t move away, and proceeds to inappropriately touch them or worse,” said Addabbo. “No one should be subjected to this type of disgusting criminal behavior, and higher penalties are needed to force these sexual deviants to think before they grope.”

The legislation was drafted after a New York State Court of Appeals decision allowed a three-time sexual offender, who assaulted subway riders, to get off without prison time. While the district attorney sought felony charges, the case was thrown out because there was no proof the victims felt threatened with violence – meaning that only a misdemeanor sex abuse charge, carrying a maximum of three months in jail, could be applied.

“This bill we passed in the Senate would raise this type of reprehensible behavior to a Class D felony, which – depending on prior criminal record – could carry a punishment ranging from probation to a maximum of seven years in prison,” said Addabbo. “People who are riding subways, buses or other forms of crowded public transportation should be able to take mass transit to go to work or otherwise go about their daily lives without suffering unwanted sexual contact from strangers. Hopefully, these significantly higher penalties will both serve as a deterrent to this behavior and a promise that gropers and grinders will be taken off the streets and off of our public transit.” Under the proposal, these acts would now be classified as sexual abuse in the first degree.

Now that the legislation has been approved by the Senate, it is under consideration by the NYS Assembly Committee on Codes.

###