



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo Marks 25th Anniversary of Landmark Federal Americans WITH Disabilities Act

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR July 31, 2015

| ISSUE: **DISABILITY**

Says Work is Ongoing to Improve Opportunities for People with Disabilities

Queens, NY (July 28, 2015): NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. is hailing the 25th Anniversary of the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), noting that the landmark federal law “has helped to open many doors for disabled men, women and children across the United States and has provided them with greater opportunities to work towards reaching their highest personal potential.”

Addabbo explained that the ADA is a sweeping civil rights law that prohibits discrimination based on disability, and requires that reasonable accommodations be made to ensure that Americans with both mental and physical disabilities are able to fully participate in society. It was signed into law on July 26, 1990, and helps to ensure fair treatment of disabled individuals in the workplace, and with regard to a variety of public accommodations.

“Whether it means providing adequate wheelchair accessibility in restrooms and recreational venues, better transportation and educational options for the disabled, or helping to ensure people with disabilities the opportunity to succeed in the labor force, the ADA has made a

significant positive difference in all of our lives,” said Addabbo. “Our disabled residents in New York State and across the nation have important contributions to make to our society, and the ADA helps to ensure that fewer barriers – both physical and otherwise – are allowed to stand in their way.”

Addabbo noted that the State Legislature took a number of positive steps to assist disabled New Yorkers during the recently adjourned 2015 legislative session. In the 2015-2016 State Budget, for example, \$2 million was allocated to provide assistance to elderly caregivers of people with developmental disabilities, and aid to 4201 schools serving blind, hearing impaired, and severely physically disabled students was increased by \$2.2 million.

“During the session, both houses of the State Legislature also passed bills to establish a Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Riders’ Council for People with Disabilities to work towards mass transit improvements, and to provide for new ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) savings accounts to help disabled people and their families better plan for future needs without losing access to Medicaid and other support services,” said Addabbo. “We also approved legislation to authorize a new income tax check-off program to increase autism awareness and research, as well a measure to aid developmentally disabled individuals in transitioning from large institutions to new community-based settings.” All of these bills (S.5437, S.4472, S.4517, and S.4094) are currently awaiting final consideration by the Governor.

Addabbo noted the Governor already signed into law two pieces of legislation to mark the 25th Anniversary of the ADA – one to better assist military families with developmentally disabled family members (S.5630) and another to codify protections for people with disabilities who are refused access to places of public accommodation, including hotels,

restaurants, hospitals, retail stores, entertainment venues, or other entities (S.1405).

“We are continuing to make steady progress in fully integrating disabled people into our society, and in providing necessary services for the most vulnerable children and adults with disabilities,” said Addabbo. “As we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the American with Disabilities Act, I hope we will all double our efforts to fight discrimination against our disabled friends and family members, and ensure that all people have a chance to aspire to and achieve their greatest dreams.”

###