



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo introduces legislation to protect the privacy of New York State Lottery winners

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR. May 17, 2017

| ISSUE: **ADDABBO, LOTTERY, PRIVACY, RACING, GAMING AND WAGERING**

To protect New York State Lottery winners from potential physical harm or fraudulent business practices, NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. has introduced legislation ([S.5466](#)) to prevent the Lottery from releasing the names of winners without their express consent.

“While you may have to be ‘in it to win it,’ holding a winning ticket shouldn’t also immediately mean that your name and hometown will be splashed all over the front pages and the nightly news,” **said Addabbo**. “There have been instances where announced lottery winners have become the victims of violent crime or been swindled by unscrupulous people posing as financial advisors or wealth managers. Lottery winners should have the choice of remaining anonymous to protect their privacy and to avoid harm.”

Under current law, the State Lottery generally requires that the names and cities of prize claimants be publicly disclosed and that winners participate in media announcements. The reasoning is that the Lottery is a government agency, that prizes are public funds, and that the identities of winners should, therefore, be disclosed.

“While the Lottery doesn’t disclose the street addresses and phone numbers of winners, it’s no secret that today’s technology allows this kind of basic information to be easily found or

obtained on the Internet if someone is motivated to look for it or pay what is usually a small fee,” **said Addabbo**. “For this reason, Lottery winners should have the option of protecting themselves from possible physical or financial harm by requesting that their names be withheld from the general public. The agency itself will have all of the identifying information it needs to administer the program, promote big payouts and responsibly disburse the funds.”

A number of large lottery prize winners throughout the United States have been murdered by family members or people who befriended them after the news of their sudden wealth became public. States that already allow lottery winners to remain anonymous are Maryland, Delaware, Kansas, North Dakota, Ohio and South Carolina.

“I hope my colleagues in the Senate and Assembly will join with me in implementing a system where the integrity of the New York State Lottery can be maintained and the privacy and safety of winners can be protected as well,” **said Addabbo**, who is the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Racing, Gaming and Wagering. The lottery privacy bill is now under this committee’s consideration.

In the Assembly, the legislation ([A.7539](#)) is sponsored by Assemblymember Stacey Pheffer Amato and is under review by the Ways and Means Committee.

RELATED LEGISLATION

2017-S5466

- Introduced
 - ◦ In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
 - ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate
 - ◦ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Requires the state to keep state lottery winners identities anonymous

March 30, 2017

In Senate Committee **Racing, Gaming and Wagering**

Sponsored by **Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.**

Do you support this bill?