



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## Addabbo believes mobile sports betting can help bring fans back to stadiums

SENATOR JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR. September 19, 2019

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With attendance dropping at stadiums across Major League Baseball (MLB) over the past few seasons, State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. believes that implementing mobile sports betting could help drive more fans to the games, at least here in New York.

According to a Daily News article, (<https://www.nydailynews.com/sports/baseball/ny-mlb-attendance-20190824-btrdnjepunas3cejlnbjovjhu-story.html>) teams throughout MLB have been losing fans in recent years, and baseball-reference.com confirms this report, showing that attendance at MLB games dipped from 72,678,797 in 2017 to 69,671,272 in 2018. And our local team right here in Queens, the Mets, saw over 200,000 less fans in that span, with a total home game attendance of 2,460,622 in 2017 to 2,224,995 in 2018.

Instead of looking at why fans haven't been showing up to games, Addabbo wants to look at ways to bring fans into the stadiums, and he believes having mobile sports betting in New York could help attendance numbers rise.

"It is no secret that MLB, and our Mets in particular, have been losing fans over the last couple of seasons, which isn't good for the franchise or baseball as a whole," Addabbo, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Racing, Gaming and Wagering, said. "I believe that if

fans have another reason to go to a stadium watch a game — because they have a bet placed on which team will win or an in-game situation — it has the potential to bring in more fans. With the technology of mobile sports betting, fans can make up-to-the-minute bets during the game, which can lead to increased interest.”

The Senator highlighted the language in his mobile sports betting bill, which soundly passed the Senate this session but was not voted on in the Assembly, which included mobile sports betting inside stadiums and arenas throughout the state.

Addabbo points to Rivers Casino and Resort in upstate New York, which has seen an increase in the number of visitors they have had since sports betting was allowed in their casino, as a success story on how sports betting can bring new fans to the games. According to a Times Union report, (<https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/NFL-opening-week-brings-gamblers-to-Rivers-Casino-14423310.php>) Rivers Casino has seen new people coming to the resort since football season kicked off, and Addabbo believes with a mobile sports betting component, fans will have another reason to watch sports, either at a casino or in person at the stadium.

“We have seen fans flock to our upstate casinos with the start of football season, but I believe our state is still losing out on significant revenue and educational funding because we do not have mobile sports betting,” Addabbo added. “Many New York residents still find it easier to go over to New Jersey to place bets, rather than going to one of the four upstate casinos that have a sports betting lounge. With the MLB playoffs starting soon, football season starting, and the hockey and basketball seasons right around the corner, money that could be going into our state’s educational fund is going to New Jersey. I hope we can seriously address mobile sports betting in New York when session begins again in January 2020.”