New York State Senate Member
Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.
15th District

District Office
159-53 102nd Street
Howard Beach, NY 11414

Press Release

For Immediate Release
Contact …………………… Patricia A. McCabe, 718-738-1111

ADDABBO'S ELECTION LAW BILLS
SIGNED IN LAW BY GOVERNOR

State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr., Chairman of the New York State Senate Elections Committee, announced that two Election Law bills he has introduced in the Senate have been signed in law by Governor David A. Paterson.

Senate Bill S5448 provides that all ballots printed for use on a voting system approved by the state board of elections may be printed and arranged in a manner which would permit them to be counted by such machine; ensures ballots can be configured in a manner that will allow scanners to sufficiently and adequately discern votes cast by voters and eliminates outdated ballot layout provisions.

The bill permits ballots for use in voting systems approved by the State Board of Elections to be printed and arranged in a manner that would permit them to be counted on such system. It also repeals Election Law section 8-310 to eliminate the antiquated processes therein, and amends Election Law section 8-312 to allow the State Board to promulgate rules and regulations for the manner of delivery of paper ballots to the voter.

The Law amends Election Law section 7-121 to provide that all ballots printed for use on a voting system approved by the State Board of Elections may be printed and arranged in a manner which would permit them to be counted by such machine and repeals Election Law section 8-310, which pertains to the manner of delivery of paper ballots to voters.

The Law also amends Election Law section 8-312 to add a new subdivision

6, which authorizes the state board of elections to adopt rules and regulations for the manner of delivery of paper ballots to the voter.

The Law takes effect immediately.

Addabbo said that although New York's full face ballot requirements remain intact, with the implementation of optical scan voting systems in poll sites the information on ballots must be configured in a manner that will allow scanners to sufficiently and adequately discern votes cast by the voters.

Ballot information includes instructions to voters, a variety of shapes for voting positions, candidates names, party endorsements, office titles, ballot proposals, party emblems, "vote for:" information, terms of office and other similar information.

"The processes found in Election Law section 8-310 are outdated and no longer serve the needs of elections administrators and election day workers," said Addabbo.

Amending section 8-312 by adding a new subdivision 6 authorizes the State Board of Elections to promulgate and modify regulations as necessary as new voting systems are deployed throughout the state. This will ensure common practices across the State, including with respect to ballot accountability, security and chain of custody.

Senate Bill S4243 relates to the qualifications used by the board of elections for establishing the minimum number of voting machines required in each polling place.

This bill provides that in determining the minimum number of voting machines required in each polling place the state board of elections shall take into account the ability of such machines to tabulate multiple official ballots.

This Bill amends Election Law section 7-203 subdivision 2 to add a requirement that, among other factors, the state board must consider the ability of new voting systems to handle multiple official ballots when determining the minimum number of voting machines that there must be in each polling place.

The Law takes effect immediately.

Addabbo said the current law requires that the state board of elections consider the machine functionality and capability, as well as several other factors, but it does not include the ability of new voting machines to read and tabulate the multiple official ballots that may be in use in a single polling station.

This bill is intended to require the consideration of the ability of

new voting machines to handle multiple ballot types in order to
provide the boards of elections flexibility in establishing poll sites
and determining how many voting machines are needed at such site.

"Cost savings will result in the implementation of new voting systems if used
efficiently to replace multiple voting systems currently in use," said Addabbo.