



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## Increased Penalties for Cemetery Vandalism

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR May 11, 2009

### SENATOR JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR. SUPPORTS INCREASED PENALTIES FOR CEMETERY VANDALISM

State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. (D-Queens) today announced that he has sponsored legislation which would increase penalties for juveniles who commit the crime of cemetery desecration.

“Under current law, there are inadequate penalties for this crime”, Senator Addabbo explained. “Youth who engage in this type of behavior are routinely reprimanded and the charges subsequently dismissed in family court. This legislation would provide that the court could not conditionally discharge a juvenile who is found to have committed this crime, and would amend the family court act to require restitution in these cases”.

The Senator noted that incidents of cemetery destruction, including defacing gravestones, toppling monuments and disturbing burial areas are on the rise, and although this behavior was once considered a minor act of vandalism, the increase in both the incidents and severity of the crime require enhanced penalties.

Senator Addabbo stated “In addition to the costs of repair and clean-up that results from acts of cemetery vandalism, this act causes immeasurable pain to the family members of the deceased to know that their loved ones final resting place has been disturbed. I support this legislation because it is my belief that if passed into law, it will hold youths who engage in this crime responsible for their actions and will provide the courts with a more appropriate and effective penalty”.