



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo Warns Seniors: Beware of Phony "Police Charity" Phone Scams This Holiday Season

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR December 28, 2010

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Queens, NY, December 28, 2010 -- NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr., a member of the Senate's Committee

on the Aging, warns seniors in his district that while it's the season for giving, they should be wary

of scam artists pretending to represent various police charities asking them for donations.

The Senator

received reports that such phone scams have been made to older members of his district during December.

"They'll tell you, in a disarmingly friendly way, that they're from some Police Benevolent Association's

charity or represent the NY State Troopers' charity. The calls are targeted primarily to seniors, and

hope to take advantage of seniors in the holiday spirit to coerce them into giving to a 'worthy cause'.

What the callers really hope to do is to drain your bank accounts," Addabbo warned. He went on to advise

seniors and others never to give strangers who call asking for money, any personal or financial information.

These scams have been going on for many years now, and the Senator believes the best thing to do is to

get as much information as possible, ask if they can be called back, and verify the information with the

police department or with whomever is calling. Addabbo said, "In this Internet age, there is information

about you that these scammers may be able to obtain before they call, like your address, phone number, and

even your age—that's how they target older adults."

According to Addabbo, The New York State Police Benevolent Association was identified as a scam by the

State Attorney General's Office during the holiday season of 2006. The callers said they were the fundraising

arm for the State Troopers. Then they request personal information like a bank account number, debit and

credit card numbers. If you ask to have their solicitation mailed to you, nothing will arrive in your mailbox.

In 2006, Public Information Officer Trooper Rebecca Gibbons advised, "The state police do not solicit donations

over the phone. Most police agencies in New York State have a police benevolent association, but they do not

call people for donations."

Gibbons further noted for residents who have a caller ID system on their phones, that the number the alleged organization is calling from is blocked or appears as “unknown caller.” Or, if you do bother to get the caller’s name and phone number, you should try to find out exactly who the money is going to, but you may find out when you call it, that the number you were given is non-existent.

“The scammers may say that they’re collecting money in support of parole and probation officers, or even of fallen officers’ children,” explained Gibbons. “They prey on people who are in the giving spirit at this festive time of the year.”

According to Gibbons, “If you receive a phone call from someone saying they are the New York State Troopers, they are not. In order to ensure that donations for local or state police agencies go where they should, contact that agency. Or, call the police directly if you want to donate; that way you know you’re giving to a local law enforcement agency.”

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