



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo Legislation Would Make Using a Governmental Agency to Harass Individuals a Crime

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR June 6, 2011

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Queens, NY, June 6, 2011 -- NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. (D-Queens) announced the bipartisan passage of one of his pieces of legislation in the Senate (S1242), which will define the use of a governmental agency to harass another individual to fall within the crime of aggravated harassment in the second degree.

Addabbo praised his bill's passing in the Senate, noting that he got the idea for the bill from constituents who complained to him about being harassed, without reason, by their neighbors. The bill passed the Senate unanimously (54-0) and a vote is pending in the Assembly.

"Neighbors and other members of a surrounding community should not have to live with fear of being inundated with unwarranted harassing messages and visits from governmental agencies and inspectors," said Addabbo. "This legislation reduces the threat of enlisting governmental agencies to seek and rectify false claims by holding those individuals liable who target others with intent to threaten and alarm." The Senator also mentioned that while both the city and state are facing tough economic times, neither can afford to waste money and resources on false accusations.

Examples of harassment can comprise a neighbor calling a city or state departmental agency on another individual to justify a false claim against that individual, to the placement of false complaints regarding illegal dumping of resources into a neighboring reservoir. A person is found guilty of aggravated harassment in the second degree when that individual harasses, annoys, threatens or alarms another through physical or verbal means. Said Addabbo, "Each unfounded claim becomes a waste of taxpayer time and money, for an inspector must invest time and effort to investigate the false claim."

Addabbo concluded, "Should this bill become law, I plan on working with the appropriate agencies to ensure individuals are no longer subjected to misconceived threats."

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