



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## Addabbo Co-Sponsors and Passes Legislation to Create New Felony Offense for Desecrating the Graves or Other Final Resting Places of Veterans

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR March 5, 2015

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**Queens, NY (March 5, 2015)** – State Senator Joseph Addabbo, Jr. recently joined his Senate colleagues in approving a bill (S.2207) he co-sponsors to create a new felony offense for criminals who desecrate cemetery plots and other burial places where veterans have been laid to rest after serving their country.

“Cemetery desecration already represents a horrendous act of disrespect to the memories of people who have passed away, but it seems even more atrocious to violate the gravesites of men and women who selflessly served their country in the armed forces and may have sacrificed their own lives in this effort,” said Addabbo, who serves as the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs. “This legislation specifically creates a new Class E felony offense, punishable by up to four years in prison, for those who target the final resting places of veterans.”

Under the terms of the bill, the new crime of “cemetery desecration of a veteran” will apply to instances in which offenders damage or steal real or personal property used as a place of interment; property used to store the remains of a veteran; or other property such as headstones, plaques, or decorations associated with the place of interment.

“Men and women who have devoted themselves to the service of our country – leaving their families behind and placing themselves in mortal danger on our behalf – deserve our deepest respect while in the armed forces, when they return home and when they reach their final resting places,” Addabbo said. “This legislation will help to ensure our veterans are honored both in life and in death – just as they should be.”

The bill was approved overwhelmingly by the New York State Senate with the Senator’s support and is now under consideration by the New York State Assembly Codes Committee.

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