



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lee M. Zeldin

## Senator Lee M. Zeldin, Assemblyman Dean Murray and Assemblyman Al Graf Announce Governor Cuomo's Signature on Grace Peshkur Bridge Legislation

LEE M. ZELDIN August 5, 2011

Suffolk County, NY- Senator Lee M. Zeldin (R, C, I- Shirley), Assemblyman Dean Murray (R, C- East Patchogue) and Assemblyman Al Graf (R, C-Holbrook) announced today that Governor Cuomo has signed their bill in to law naming the Waverly Avenue Bridge over the Long Island Expressway in Holtsville in honor of Grace Peshkur.

Grace Peshkur of Holtsville passed away on May 17, 2009, at the age of seven. She suffered from Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB), also known as Butterfly Disease, a connective tissue condition causing blisters in the skin and mucosal membranes. EB sufferers resemble burn victims but their wounds never heal.

"Grace Peshkur touched the lives of so many people in her short life," said Assemblyman Murray who introduced the legislation in the Assembly. "Grace was so brave at such a young age. Naming this bridge after her not only keeps her memory alive within the community, but also will bring more awareness to this disease in hopes of one day finding a cure."

"It's a great honor that we can help a family and community heal after such a tragedy. By naming this bridge after Grace, it can memorialize her and her story as part of the permanent fabric of the Holtsville community. I want to thank all those involved with this

effort and I commend the Governor for signing this legislation into law so that we can have a permanent reminder of Grace,” said Senator Lee Zeldin, the sponsor of the legislation in the Senate.

“By naming this bridge after Grace she will continue to touch the lives of many more people. A bridge named after this young brave soul will and should encourage people to reach out to other little Grace’s within our community to help assist these families and re-enforce that our community will always stand behind them in their hour of need.” said Assemblyman Alfred C. Graf, co-sponsor of this legislation in the Assembly.

Grace was an inspiration to many families across New York who rallied around her. She greatly helped raise awareness about EB. She was featured in numerous news stories to raise awareness about EB, and spoke before classrooms and groups to educate people about the disease. Through these efforts by Grace, her family and friends, new protocols for treatment were established, helping the lives of thousands of children suffering from this disease. Because of Grace Peshkur, the last week of October is now reserved as National Epidermolysis Bullosa Awareness Week in the United States.

All three legislators, as well as Grace’s family and friends, will be planning a bridge dedication and remembrance event in the fall in honor of Grace.