



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Sgt. Elisha R. Parker Veterans Memorial Highway dedicated in honor of soldier killed in Iraq

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO October 1, 2015

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CAMDEN - State Senator Joseph Griffo and New York State Department of Transportation Commissioner Matthew J. Driscoll today announced the ceremonial designation of the **Sergeant Elisha R. Parker Veterans Memorial Highway** on Route 13 in the village of Camden, Oneida County to honor Marine Corps Sgt. Parker, who was killed in the Iraq War.

Senator Joseph Griffo said: “Like every serviceman and woman throughout history who put their life on the line for the sake of our nation, Sgt. Parker courageously answered that call to service because he believed in America’s principles of liberty and freedom. He believed in his community, he believed in his family, he believed in his God and he believed that we all must

do our part to ensure that our country remains strong and dedicated to its ideals. This Veterans Memorial Highway honors Sgt. Parker for the hero that he is, and will always serve for those who drive by as a timeless symbol of the brave selflessness possessed by all who have defended our nation.”

This designated portion of the state highway passes through the northern Oneida County hometown of 21-year-old Sgt. “Eli” Parker, who died on May 4, 2006, while conducting combat operations against enemy forces in Al Anbar Province, Iraq, as a combat engineer.

Commissioner Driscoll said: “The bravery of Sgt. Parker and others who sacrificed their lives to fight for their country cannot be understated,” Commissioner Driscoll said. “I thank Sgt. Parker’s parents for the ultimate sacrifice they have made and hope that in making this sign a reality, Governor Cuomo can help bring honor to Sgt. Parker’s memory.”

Sgt. Parker’s parents, Donna and Renny Parker, said: “Our family is extremely grateful for the dedication of this section of highway through the village of Camden in our son's honor. Memorials such as this serve as a visible reminder of sacrifices made, not only by Eli, but by all our fallen service members. This road sign is not only a reminder that Eli died in service to his country, but also that he lived and is not forgotten by his family and his community.”

Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush said: “We give thanks for Sgt. Parker, who set an example for his friends and family of how to live joyfully and give of oneself for the noble causes of freedom and love of country. He wholly epitomized the meaning of the slogan ‘The Few. The Proud. The Marines.’ There is not a day that his family and loved ones don’t think of him. Dedicating this highway in his name will encourage our community to reflect on this hero’s service and the life he gave for our safety and liberty.”

Oneida County Executive Anthony Picente said: “Sgt. Parker gave the last full measure of devotion to his country. We can never thank him or his family enough, but today we honor him in a lasting way. This Veterans Memorial Highway honors Sgt. Parker and will stand as a monument to his bravery and patriotism, as well as a reminder to all who drive past that Sgt. Parker gave his life to ensure our nation’s citizens’ life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.”

Village of Camden Deputy Mayor Jeff Oatman said: “Thanks to the continuous dedication of the friends and family of Eli Parker, and everyone else who played a role, a prominent part of our village highway will be consecrated in honor of Eli and all the other heroes from our community that have fallen before him. There is no greater sacrifice that can be made for your country, your community and especially your family, than to offer your life in order to preserve the rights and freedoms we are all entitled to pursue. Our hearts go out to the

Parker family and all the other families who deserve this honor and dedication.”

Born in Rome, Oneida County, Sgt. Parker was a 2002 graduate of Camden Central School, and he joined the U.S. Marine Corps immediately after graduating high school. Sgt. Parker was assigned to the 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force out of Camp Pendleton, California, and he was on his third tour of duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom at the time of his death.

State Department of Transportation has installed two signs on State Route 13 noting the ceremonial designation.

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