



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Senator Young, Local Officials, Veterans Gather to Dedicate State Route 15A in Honor of Area Veterans

CATHARINE YOUNG November 13, 2015

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LIVINGSTON COUNTY – Paying tribute to veterans in Livingston County, Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – Olean) today held dedication ceremonies to designate portions of State Route 15A as the Springwater Veterans Memorial Highway and the Livonia Veterans Memorial Highway.

“Our heroic veterans have given so much for us, and we owe them all a deep debt of gratitude,” said Senator Young. “The communities of Springwater and Livonia have a rich

history of contributing in defense of our nation, and they are tremendously proud of their citizens who have answered our nation's call. These sections of Route 15A will stand as a testament to our veterans' sacrifices, commitment and selflessness. Every day, motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians will travel along the highway and be reminded that the freedom they enjoy is made possible by our veterans, past and present."

"At a time when many in our society do not know or appreciate the sacrifices made by our veterans, our dedication of this marker today will take a small step toward acknowledging and thanking them for their service. We can never forget they left their homes and families in Livingston County to travel to the corners of the earth, as Americans, to bring peace for all humankind," said Assemblyman Bill Nojay.

The movement to have State Route 15A designated as a "Veterans Memorial Highway" began after the Town of Lima passed a resolution requesting the route, which serves as the main street in the town, be designated to honor local veterans. Upon learning of the request, members of the Honeoye Falls Legion Auxiliary Unit #664, with support from the Honeoye Falls Legion Post #664, saw an opportunity to expand the effort by incorporating the full length of Route 15A between Wayland and Rochester.

Led by Michelle Kavanaugh, the past President of the Honeoye Falls American Legion Auxiliary, and the Commander of the Honeoye Falls American Legion, the 15A Veterans Memorial Highway Committee was established, and the group began reaching out to area veterans organizations to gather support for the initiative. The committee also began contacting each of the municipalities that the road passes through to gain support and request formal resolutions. After successfully garnering the necessary request from each town, members of the 15A Veterans Memorial Highway Committee approached members of the Senate and Assembly to sponsor the legislation. This resulted in a series of eight bills that

successfully designate State Route 15A as a “Veterans Memorial Highway.”

After passing the Senate and Assembly and being signed by the Governor earlier this year, the portion of Route 15A that passes through the Town of Springwater now stands as the “Springwater Veterans Memorial Highway,” and the portion that passes through the Town of Livonia serves as the “Livonia Veterans Memorial Highway.” The nearly nine-mile stretch in Springwater and Livonia, and the 34 total miles that make up the whole of State Route 15A, serve as a salute to all those service men and women, past and present, hailing from their respective towns.

“On behalf of Governor Andrew Cuomo, the New York State Department of Transportation is honored and humbled to play a part in paying tribute to so many of our veterans,” said New York State Department of Transportation Regional Director Kevin Bush. “This designation and the signs on this section of State Route 15A will always remind travelers of the dedicated and courageous service to their country.”

“The Highway 15A Committee is grateful to Senator Young and Assemblyman Nojay for their leadership in shepherding this legislation through to fruition. As a result of their attention to this project, we are now assured that future generations will have a visible reminder along this highway of the selfless role our veterans play as guardians of our liberty today and throughout the course of history,” said Michelle Kavanaugh, Chair of the 15A Veterans Memorial Highway Committee.

“As a veteran and a resident of Livingston County it is comforting to know that our elected officials have followed in the footsteps of President Lincoln. With the words, *‘To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan,’* President Lincoln affirmed the government’s obligation to care for those injured during the war and to provide for the

families of those who perished on the battlefield.” said Jason Skinner, Deputy Director of the Livingston County Veterans Service Agency.

Livingston County is home to an estimated 5,000 veterans, according to statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau.

“For generations, veterans from Springwater and Livonia have gone off to war and many have not returned. They have given their lives so that others can live free. State Route 15A will now serve as a way for us, as citizens of this great state and nation, to say thank you for that sacrifice,” said Senator Young.