



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Bridges on Interstate 86 Honor the Project's Champion

CATHARINE YOUNG November 14, 2015



FRIENDSHIP – Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I-Olean) and Assemblyman Joseph Giglio (R,C,I-Gowanda) today joined New York State Department of Transportation Region 6 Director Brian Kelly, members of the Allegany County Board of Legislators, representatives from the Town of Friendship, and friends and family of the late-Susan Foster Myers to designate the bridges that cross Interstate 86 over State Route 275 in her memory.

Mrs. Myers, a former Friendship Town Councilwoman and Allegany County Legislator, will be posthumously honored for her efforts to improve life in Allegany County and her personal crusade to have Route 17 designated as an interstate highway.

“Susan Foster Myers was a faithful public servant who cared deeply about Allegany County and our whole region. She was passionate about bettering the lives of those around her, and the designation of Route 17 as Interstate 86 was among her highest priorities. Sue believed that the roadway would bring an economic boost for Friendship, Allegany County and the Southern Tier as a whole by helping to create new jobs and encouraging businesses to expand here,” said Senator Young.

“Today, Interstate 86 remains an important part of our economic infrastructure, and this wouldn’t have been possible without Sue’s unwavering efforts. The Susan Foster Myers Memorial Bridge will stand as a testament to Sue’s life, her passion for the community, and her generous spirit. Memorializing these bridges is a great gesture of appreciation for her hard work and diligence,” she said.

“Sue Myers was the face of the Town of Friendship and much of Allegany County for many years,” said Assemblyman Giglio. “She, along with her husband, Al, spent nearly all of their time focusing on issues that impacted their home community, whether it was the Freedom Fair festival, the local library or a government-related task. Sue’s devotion and compassion is truly missed, and I’m happy that we’ll now have the Susan Foster Myers Memorial Bridge to honor her legacy.”

“On behalf of Governor Andrew Cuomo, the New York State Department of Transportation is honored to be able to pay this tribute to Susan Foster Myers,” said New York State Department of Transportation Commissioner Matthew J. Driscoll. “This designation and the signs for these bridges carrying Interstate 86 over State Route 275 in the Town of Friendship will always remind travelers of the dedicated public service of Ms. Myers.”

Sue’s husband, Alan Myers, said, “Sue was very interested in economic development.

Through her research, she discovered that businesses tend to be located along interstates, even over other four-lane roadways, and many contracts for tour buses stipulate that they must travel on interstates instead of other kinds of highways. This got it into her head that we should make Route 17 an interstate. I think these bridges will serve as a very appropriate tribute to Sue's work. Not long after NY 17 became I-86, the road surface began to rapidly deteriorate, causing Sue to enquire as to when it was going to be repaired. The answer was that it was on the schedule to be done 10 to 12 years hence. She said that was unacceptable and began to collect the many large chunks of concrete that were breaking out of the joints in the pavement. On them she wrote I-86 and the date. She gave these to the New York State Senators, Legislators and NY Department of Transportation officials as paper weights for their desks. In a short period, the scheduled time of reconstruction of I-86 in Allegany County was reduced to 5 to 6 years. She was very proud of this effort."

Curtis Crandall, Chairman of the Allegany County Board of Legislators, said, "It was an honor to know and to serve with Sue Myers on the Allegany County Legislature. Her commitment to the people of Allegany County was second to none. As Chairman I feel privileged to participate in the ceremony that dedicates these bridges to Sue. It will stand as a constant reminder of the work she did on our behalf, and I will cherish the memory of her each time I pass it as will all the people whose lives she touched."

James Bradley Blouvet, Supervisor for the Town of Friendship, said, "Knowing Susan was an honor. She will be greatly missed in the Town of Friendship."

Susan Foster Myers began her campaign to have State Route 17 designated as an interstate by collecting a petition of about 1,000 signatures and personally delivering them to then Congressman Amo Houghton. Mrs. Myers then became co-chair of a three-county task force to get the road designated as an interstate, and she served in that position for about 15 years.

First elected to the Friendship Town Board in 1990, Mrs. Myers won a full term in 1991. She was then elected to the Allegany County Legislature in fall 1994 and won re-election in 1997 and 2001.

Mrs. Myers was appointed to the board of the Friendship Free Library in 1991, and she remained an active board member until her passing in 2014. While a member of the board, she served in nearly all its offices, including as President of the Board for about 10 years.

Along with her work as a public officer, she also served on the board of Southern Tier West (chairing its transportation committee), the Genesee Valley Greenway Board, and the Seneca Trail Resource Conservation and Development board (serving as the New York State R C & D organization Vice President). She was chair of the 2000 U.S. Census effort in Allegany County and Chair of the Board of the Friendship-Cuba Economic Development Zone (EDZ) in 2000, continuing until the state discontinued the EDZ Boards in 2009. Prior to her passing, she was also a member of the Allegany County Youth Board.

Married in August 1965, Susan and Alan Myers first met while exploring caves in the Albany, New York area. Together, the couple raised two sons, Charles Edwin Myers, Ph.D. and Trent Alan Myers, and Susan was loving grandmother of four, Rachel, Joshua, Jessica and Hannah Myers.

She passed away while traveling overseas with her husband in March 2014.