



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

## Senator Murphy's New Road Bill Paved with Good Intentions

TERRENCE MURPHY January 31, 2018

| ISSUE: **SAW MILL RIVER PARKWAY, HONORING LOCAL VETERANS, WESTCHESTER COUNTY PURPLE HEART HIGHWAY**



Albany, NY - We never take enough time to thank our veterans for protecting our families and our freedom. It is only fitting that New York, the birthplace of the Purple Heart, should be the focus of an effort to recognize our veterans and that Senator Terrence Murphy, an ardent supporter of our Armed Forces should be the driving force behind that honor. To salute the 1.8 million recipients of the Purple Heart, Senator Murphy sponsored S7004, a bill designating a portion of the Saw Mill River Parkway as the "Westchester County Purple

Heart Highway." The new name applies to the Saw Mill River Parkway from exit 39 at the border of the town/village of Mt. Kisco and the town of Bedford and continues southwesterly to exit 23 to the border of the town of Mt. Pleasant and town of Greenburgh.

"The people of the 40th Senate District have great admiration and the utmost gratitude for all the men and women who have selflessly served their country, particularly those that left their families and communities and willfully placed themselves in harm's way for the good of everyone and never returned," said Senator Murphy. "It is incumbent upon us to honor the members of our armed forces wounded or killed while in the service of our country. By designating a Purple Heart Highway in Westchester we can salute and forever remember their bravery and the sacrifices they made on our behalf."

"Naming portions of the Westchester highway system after those who has had the distinguished honor of receiving the Purple Heart reminds everyone of the sacrifices that were made by these heroes to preserve our freedom," said Westchester County Legislator Margaret Cunzio. " I support this bill and hope to see it pass through the state legislature."

New Castle Town Supervisor Rob Greenstein stated, "Senator Murphy has been a strong advocate for our Veterans. I applaud any and all efforts to pay tribute to the incredibly brave men and women of our Armed Forces who are recipients of the Purple Heart."

Mt. Pleasant Town Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi said, "This bill will bring further recognition to the Westchester County Veterans who, in the service of their community and country, made extraordinary sacrifices to protect our freedom. Naming a section of the Saw Mill Parkway in their honor will remind everyone that we should be proud of our veterans and support them in any way we can."

"These special warriors deserve the recognition. They served their country when called upon and they did so with courage, dignity, and conviction," said Ron Tocci, Director Westchester County Veterans Service Agency. "I want to thank Senator Murphy for continuing to act as an advocate for our veterans."

Created as the Badge of Military Merit by General George Washington in 1782, the Purple Heart is the oldest military decoration awarded by the United States. The Purple Heart is given to those who have been killed or wounded by enemy action.

One of the most recent recipients was 25-year-old Army First Lieutenant Victor Prato of Somers, who was injured in November 2017 when his convoy was struck by a car bomb in Afghanistan. He was awarded a Purple Heart a month later. Prato had been serving in Kandahar, Afghanistan, with the 82nd Airborne Division in support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel.

Local Purple Heart recipients and members of the Military Order of the Purple Heart include William "Willy" Nazario of Cortlandt, Commander for the Department of New York Military Order of the Purple Heart, who was given his award for volunteering, among his many heroic acts, to serve as point man for Fox Company 2, 7th Battalion in Vietnam.

"We at the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Department of New York thank Senator Murphy for honoring veterans by sponsoring legislation to have a section of the Saw Mill River Parkway named the Westchester County Purple Heart Highway," said Nazario. "It is a fitting tribute to those men and women who have shed blood in defense of our great nation. It will serve as a reminder to all who travel this highway that, 'Freedom is not Free' for we must never forget the sacrifices of those who not only shed blood but made the ultimate sacrifice for this nation's freedoms."

Other local recipients include Vietnam veteran Eugene Lang of Yorktown, who heroically charged an enemy mortar and was hit with shrapnel during the Battle of Khe Sanh; Staff Sergeant Ray Kilduff of Patterson, who served alongside General George S. Patton in North Africa and Anzio; and Thomas Burniston of Croton-on-Hudson, who fought in some of the fiercest engagements during the Vietnam War.

The bill passed the Senate January 29 and was delivered to the Assembly for further action.