



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Sherman Man Awarded Liberty Medal for Saving Students

CATHARINE YOUNG February 16, 2018

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SHERMAN – A Sherman Central School Bus Driver was honored by Senator Catharine Young, (R, C, I – 57th District), with a Liberty Medal, the highest recognition bestowed by the New York State Senate.

David Tenpas was on his normal morning bus route on January 4, when he noticed the buses' brakes were failing and “running hot.”

He quickly pulled to the side of the road as smoke rose from the undercarriage of the bus. Mr. Tenpas calmly evacuated the 12 students onboard the bus and contacted the school to have another bus pick up the children.

It was one of the coldest days of winter, with temperatures hovering in the single digits and a wind chill driving temperatures down to minus 30 degrees.

Due to Mr. Tenpas' quick and decisive actions, the children were exposed to these dangerous temperatures for only three minutes before another bus arrived. Shortly after the second bus pulled away, Mr. Tenpas' school bus burst into flames.

Fire soon engulfed the bus and despite the efforts of the Stanley Hose Company, the bus was a total loss.

"Each day when our children leave home for school, we put our faith in school staff and teachers, knowing they will protect and care for them," Senator Young said. "Mr. Tenpas justifies that faith. He was calm under pressure and ensured that all the students, entrusted to his care, were safe."

Established in 2014, the New York State Liberty Medal is the highest honor a Senator can bestow upon a constituent. It is awarded to individuals who merit special recognition for exceptional, heroic or humanitarian acts.

"A hero acts to save another without thinking about the danger or the risk to themselves," Senator Young said. "Mr. Tenpas certainly fits the definition of a hero."

Mr. Tenpas was presented with a Liberty Medal and a New York State Senate Resolution by Senator Young during a ceremony at Sherman Central School on Friday.

“Mr. Tenpas is an example to us all. Recognizing exceptional action that protects and benefits others is why the Liberty Medal was created,” Senator Young said. “I was honored to be able to present him with his medal.”