



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie-Walczyk Bill Naming Part of NYS Route 37 After Beloved Journalist Charles “Chuck” Kelly Signed Into Law

BRIAN DWYER August 9, 2019

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A bill sponsored by State Senator Patty Ritchie and Assemblyman Mark Walczyk naming a portion of State Highway 37 in Ogdensburg, the “Charles ‘Chuck’ Kelly Memorial Highway” has been signed into law. The beloved journalist and advocate for the North Country passed away last October at the age of 83.

“The name Chuck Kelly is synonymous with Ogdensburg,” said State Senator Patty Ritchie.

“As a beloved journalist and a tireless advocate for the North Country, he dedicated his life to making our region a better place. Chuck was a great friend and a true champion for the North Country, as well as its people. By naming a portion of Route 37 in his honor, we ensure his legacy will never be forgotten.”

“Chuck Kelly set the bar when it comes to fair and honest reporting. It wasn’t just his ability as a journalist that defined him, it was his passion for giving back to the community that meant so much to him,” said Assemblyman Mark Walczyk.

“I couldn’t be happier to see this bill signed into law, which will rename a portion of State Route 37 in Chuck’s honor, allowing the Maple City to remember the impact he had on the community. Chuck made it his goal to leave Ogdensburg, and all of St. Lawrence County, better off than he found it, and he succeeded in achieving that goal.”

This is the first bill sponsored by Assemblyman Walczyk that has been signed into law.

The “Charles ‘Chuck’ Kelly Memorial Highway” will begin at the intersection of New York State Route 37 and New York Avenue in the City of Ogdensburg up to the intersection of New York State Route 37 and New York State Route 37-A.

For 56 years, Kelly worked each day to ensure his readers were informed on the issues most important to their lives, while keeping governments accountable for their decisions. Kelly won numerous awards for his work, using the relationships he was able to cultivate along the way to help the city of Ogdensburg and the North Country achieve success.

In addition, he was instrumental in efforts to locate new state correctional facilities in Ogdensburg, as well as successfully helping keep the Ogdensburg Correctional Facility from closing in 2011. He also fought alongside local leaders to prevent the closure of the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center in 2013. It was because of his strong advocacy for these facilities

that Senator Ritchie and Assemblyman Walczyk specifically selected the portion of NYS Route 37 that runs in front of them to be named after Kelly.

In addition to being a journalist, Kelly served his country in United States Army during which he was stationed overseas in France and Germany.

Kelly also served on the boards of numerous local organizations including the Ogdensburg Boys and Girls Club, the St. Lawrence County Cancer Society, the Ogdensburg Volunteer Rescue Squad, the Greater Ogdensburg Chamber of Commerce, the A. Barton Hepburn Hospital Development Council and Foundation, Ogdensburg Catholic Charities, the Ogdensburg Recreation Commission and the St. Lawrence Eastern Ontario Commission to which he was appointed by then Governor Hugh Carey, among many others.