



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patricia Fahy

Senator Fahy Introduces Legislation Honoring Fallen Rotterdam National Guardsman, State Trooper

[Patricia Fahy](#)

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- [Rotterdam](#)



ALBANY, N.Y. – Senator Patricia Fahy (D—Albany) and Assemblymember Angelo Santabarbara (D—Rotterdam) announced today they have introduced legislation ([S.1489 Fahy/A.2131 Santabarbara](#)) to rename the bridge located between Kellar Avenue and South Thompson Street on State Route 159 in the Town of Rotterdam as the ‘John M. Grassia III Memorial Bridge’.

The late New York Army National Guard member John M. Grassia III distinguished himself in his profession and through his sincere dedication and substantial contributions to the welfare of his community, state, and country as both a helicopter pilot for the National Guard and New York State Trooper. While on a mission with the National Guard in 2024, John M. Grassia III's helicopter crashed near the City of Rio Grande City and southern border of Texas, resulting in the tragic loss of 2 local lives, including CW2 Casey N. Frankoski; the soldiers were assigned to a regiment that has been operating as part of Joint Task Force North, a military unit which supports U.S. Customs and Border Protection operations on the southwestern border.

Renaming this bridge after National Guardsman John Grassia III would express the Capital Region’s grateful appreciation and heartfelt regret in recognition of the loss of this courageous individual who dedicated his purposeful life and career to serve and protect.

As his family remembers CW2 Grassia and [reflect on his short but fulfilled life](#), let us remember the lessons John imparted through his actions: to serve with honor, to love without limits, and to embrace today because tomorrow is not promised. John Michael Grassia III was a hero not only in how he died but, more importantly, in how he lived. He made a positive difference in our world, and the ripple effect of his life carries on now and forever.

To continue his memory are his parents, John Michael Grassia Jr. and Judith (Poltorak) Grassia; sisters, Gina (Ryan) McDermott and Krista (Marcus) Rotondi; cherished nieces and nephews, Declan and Liliana McDermott and JJ, Frankie and Mila Rotondi; loving aunts and uncles, Valerie (Raymond) Bleser, Richard (June) Poltorak, Vincent (Anita) Grassia and Sandra Gizzi; as well as many cousins and extended family members. He is predeceased by his grandparents, Richard and Constance Poltorak and John and Mary Grassia Sr. John has been reunited at the rainbow bridge with his loving dogs, Abby and Myah.

“National Guardsman and New York State Trooper John Grassia III represents the best of us and the Capital Region as someone who selflessly served their community, state, and fellow Americans,” **said New York State Senator Patricia Fahy**. “Our community still mourns his loss but we can honor his memory through memorializing his service, sacrifice, and contributions. I look forward to seeing this legislation signed into law in honor of CW2 John Grassia III, his family, and thank Assemblymember Angelo Santabarbara for introducing this legislation in the State Assembly.”

“John M. Grassia III embodied the courage, dedication, and selflessness that define a true hero. As a National Guardsman and New York State Trooper, he committed his life to serving and protecting others,” **said Assemblymember Angelo Santabarbara**. “I’m pleased to bring this legislation forward to rename the bridge on State Route 159 in his hometown of Rotterdam as the ‘John M. Grassia III Memorial Bridge.’ This tribute will serve as a reminder of his service and sacrifice, honoring his memory for generations to come.”

“The family of CW2 John Michael Grassia III extends our deepest gratitude to the state legislature for their unwavering commitment to honoring our loved one’s memory,” **said the family of CW2 John Michael Grassia, III, and parents Judith and John Grassia**. “Your recognition not only keeps his legacy alive but also celebrates him as an esteemed American hero. We deeply appreciate the efforts of

all those involved in this resolution and the continued support we have received.”

"CW2 Grassia was a protector. He devoted his life to the strength of our nation, the safety of his community and the wellbeing of his loved ones," **said Senator Jake Ashby (D—Castleton)**. "The John M. Grassia III Memorial Bridge will be a lasting tribute to his profound service and unshakeable courage. His story will inspire New Yorkers for generations."

###

related legislation

[2025-S1489](#)

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- Introduced
 - ◦ In Committee Assembly
 - ◦ In Committee Senate
 - ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - ◦ On Floor Calendar Senate
 - ◦ Passed Assembly
 - ◦ Passed Senate
 - Delivered to Governor
 - Signed By Governor
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[Designates a portion of the state highway as the "John M. Grassia III Memorial Bridge"](#)

January 10, 2025

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Sponsored by [Patricia Fahy](#)

Do you support this bill?