



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

Larkin Bill To Name Portion Of 9w After 86th Blackhawk Infantry Division Becomes Law

[WILLIAM J. LARKIN JR.](#) August 3, 2006

This week, Senator Bill Larkin reports to residents that legislation he carried in the Senate to name a portion of Route 9W in Orange and Ulster Counties as the "86th Blackhawk Infantry Division Memorial Highway" has been signed into law by Governor George E. Pataki.

"From the formation of the 86th Infantry Division during World War I until the Division was deactivated on December 30, 1946, the Blackhawk Infantry Division was a critical component of the United States Army," said Senator Larkin. "The heroic actions of these soldiers represents the tremendous sacrifices they made to defend, protect, and preserve the freedoms we cherish. Naming this portion of the New York State Highway system after them is just one small way of recognizing these special individuals and expressing the gratitude all New Yorkers feel for their sacrifice."

The new law, Chapter 322 of the Laws of 2006, adds a new section to the Highway Law to designate Route 9W from the border of Orange & Rockland County north through all of Orange County and a portion of Ulster County terminating in the Town of Esopus at the bridge which spans the Rondout Creek as the "86th Blackhawk Infantry Division Memorial Highway."

Senator Larkin said that there is no other highway in all of New York State dedicated to the 86th Blackhawk Infantry Division.

The Blackhawks were one of the few Army units to serve in both the European and Pacific theaters during World War II. The 86th spearheaded Patton's Third Army as it moved through Bavaria, and when Germany surrendered in May, 1945, the Blackhawks were within 23 miles of Adolf Hitler's mountain retreat, Berchtesgaden. The Division was then immediately shifted to the Pacific theater and stationed in the Philippines just after Japan signed surrender documents on September, 1945. The primary responsibility of the Division was to train and equip the newly organized Philippine Army.