



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Senator Valesky Proposes Legislation to Celebrate Legacy of Harriet Tubman by Naming Memorial Highway

DAVID J. VALESKY May 28, 2010

SYRACUSE, N.Y.— The State Senate today passed legislation sponsored by Senator David J. Valesky (D-Oneida) that will designate New York State Highway Route 34 as the Harriet Tubman Memorial Highway.”

“This legislation celebrates the hard work and sacrifices Harriet Tubman made in the name of abolition,” Senator Valesky said. “It is a fitting tribute to her efforts and to Central New York’s strong ties to both the abolitionist and women’s rights movement.”

Harriet Tubman, famous for her grit and determination in bringing slaves to freedom using the Underground Railroad, settled in Auburn in 1859 in a house she bought from then-U.S. Senator James Seward. In her later years, she founded the Harriet Tubman House for elderly black people, and worked with Susan B. Anthony and other suffragettes to advance the women’s rights movement.

Route 34 runs between Route 104 in the town of Hannibal in Oswego County and Route 17c in the town of Waverly in Tioga County, crossing through Auburn, where Tubman lived for 50 years until her death in 1913.

“This is a great tribute to Harriet Tubman’s courage and accomplishments. Route 34 is a well traveled road through Cayuga County, bringing travelers right to Harriet’s home on South Street,” said City of Auburn Mayor Michael Quinn.

“This is a great and wonderful gesture for the women who helped shape the outcome of the United States by freeing those in bondage and fighting against slavery,” Pauline Johnson, great grand niece of Tubman, said.

Wonderful, just wonderful that New York can honor such an amazing women like this. Route 34 runs north and south, perfectly symbolizing Harriet Tubman’s travels in the fight against slavery. She was a women living for a cause, rather than just because,” said Reverend Paul Carter who manages the Harriet Tubman House in Auburn.

“I am extremely delighted and honored to have our community have a highway leading to the Tubman home,” said Gilda Brower. “Harriet Tubman deserves this recognition because of her personal commitment to what she believed was right. She is a hero for all Americans.”

Laurel Ulyette, chairperson for the Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism of Auburn & Cayuga County, said the organization “felt that Route 34 was the most appropriate roadway as it runs directly past both the Tubman Home and the home of William Seward, who sold the property to Harriet Tubman. Running north and south it also symbolizes the numerous trips Tubman made bringing slaves to freedom.”

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