



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Governor Cuomo signs new law co-sponsored by Senator O'Mara to more immediately honor fallen firefighters like longtime Horseheads Fire Chief Dick Sullivan

THOMAS F. O'MARA July 12, 2012

| ISSUE: **FIREFIGHTERS**



Albany, N.Y., July 12—Legislation co-sponsored by State Senator Tom O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats) to ensure that every New York State volunteer or professional firefighter killed in the line of duty has his or her name included on the New York State Fallen Firefighters Memorial in Albany, has been signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo.

“New York State’s firefighters put their lives on the line day in and day out, and they earn and deserve every measure of honor and respect that we can offer and provide,” said O’Mara. “This new law ensures that every firefighter who dies in the line of duty will immediately be provided a place and forever be remembered on the New York State Fallen Firefighters Memorial.”

The new law (S.7458/A.10046, Chapter 104 of the Laws of 2012), which takes effect immediately, expands the criteria for inclusion to ensure that every firefighter killed while performing services in the line of duty has his or her name included on the Fallen Firefighters Memorial.

The new law stems from cases like that of the [late, longtime Horseheads Fire Chief Dick Sullivan](#), who died of a suspected heart attack in April 2006 after participating in a live training drill. The state Office of Fire Prevention and Control did not immediately approve Sullivan’s name for the Memorial since, under a technicality as part of the old state law, he did not die while fighting a fire or responding to an emergency. Following an extended effort by Sullivan’s family and fellow firefighters, including his brother Art, the current Horseheads Fire Chief, and son, Kevin, a Horseheads Fire Captain, Sullivan was included on the Fallen Firefighters Memorial during a ceremony in Albany last October.

O’Mara said that the new law will help ensure that fallen firefighters like Dick Sullivan and all others are immediately included on the Memorial and recognized for their bravery and sacrifice.

The family of the late Dick Sullivan released the following statement: “We want to thank Gov. Andrew Cuomo for signing this new law, as well as Sen. Tom O’Mara for co-sponsoring it. Knowing that other families of fallen fire fighters will not have to endure a long delay before their loved one is rightfully honored by New York State is very comforting.”

Governor Cuomo said, “The Fallen Firefighters Memorial honors the lives of our state's bravest men and women who died while protecting others. Every firefighter who has paid the ultimate sacrifice while protecting their community deserves to be recognized for their courage and heroic service. This new law will ensure that New York State properly recognizes the extraordinary sacrifice of all firefighters who died while putting their lives on the line and that their memory is preserved forever.”

The New York State Fallen Firefighters Memorial is located on the Empire State Plaza in Albany. The wall bearing the names of 2,300 fallen firefighters was dedicated in 1999.