



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara-Friend legislation approved to designate '6994th Security Squadron Memorial Highway': Portion of I-86 will honor service of pilots, ground crews and support personnel of Vietnam-era Air Force squadron (UPDATED)

THOMAS F. O'MARA October 6, 2016

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We hope that the designation of the '6994th Security Squadron Memorial Highway' will stand as an expression of our nation's enduring gratitude and respect.

Elmira, N.Y., October 6—Legislation sponsored by State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) and Assemblyman Chris Friend (R,C,I- Big Flats) to designate a portion of I-86 in Chemung

County as the “6994th Security Squadron Memorial Highway” has been signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo.

In a joint statement, O’Mara and Friend said, “The pilots, ground crews and all of the support personnel of the 6994th Squadron served our nation throughout the Vietnam War admirably and with amazing courage. We’re proud to remember, honor and pay tribute to their service and bravery. We hope that the designation of the ‘6994th Security Squadron Memorial Highway’ will stand as an expression of our nation’s enduring gratitude and respect.”

O’Mara and Friend said that they sponsored the legislation (**S5582/A9664, Chapter 366 of the Laws of 2016**) at the request of Joseph Giammichele of Horseheads, who served with the Squadron and is currently one of its alumni officers.

According to the 6994th Security Squadron website (<http://www.6994th.com>), “The 6994th Security Squadron served in Southeast Asia from 1966 thru 1974. The air crews, with the support of our ground crews, flew in unarmed WWII vintage EC-47 aircraft and earned the motto, ‘Unarmed, Alone, and Unafraid.’ This Air Force Squadron was responsible for locating and identifying the enemy using airborne radio direction finding (ARDF) techniques and collecting intelligence information in support of ground combat commanders. As a result of their work, many attacks on friendly forces were mitigated and it has been reported that up to 95% of the B-52 attacks in Vietnam were based in part on information collected by the squadron. This squadron is still the most highly decorated squadron in the history of the current 25th Air Force and all of its predecessor organizations.”

O’Mara and Friend that an approximately four-mile stretch of I-86 in Chemung County, from Exit 54 (Ithaca/Horseheads) to Exit 56 (Elmira/Jerusalem Hill), will receive the designation. A state Department of Transportation (DOT) ceremony will be scheduled at a later date to

formally unveil the DOT signs that will designate the section.

Read and watch more on *WENY-TV*, "**I-86 Vietnam Veterans Highway Designation**"

Read more from the *Star-Gazette*, "**Air Force squadron gets I-86 memorial designation**"