ASSEMBLY, No. 473

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman JOHN CATALANO
District 10 (Ocean)

SYNOPSIS

Designates portion of State Highway Route No. 35 as "Chosin Few Memorial Highway."

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.

AN ACT designating a portion of State Highway Route No. 35 in Ocean County as the "Chosin Few Memorial Highway."

WHEREAS, The Battle of Chosin Reservoir was a battle in the Korean War in which approximately 25,000 American-led United Nations ("UN") troops, referred to as the "Chosin Few" or the "Frozen Chosin," under the command of General Douglas MacArthur faced about 120,000 Chinese volunteers who were under instructions to completely eliminate their enemy; and

WHEREAS, The battle took place in below-freezing temperatures in a mountainous area in the northeastern part of North Korea and was fought over a ten-day period during the months of November and December in 1950; and

WHEREAS, After large numbers of Chinese soldiers surrounded the UN troops at the Chosin Reservoir, a brutal battle ensued, and, although they inflicted enormous casualties on the Chinese forces, the UN troops were forced to evacuate southward out of North Korea; and

WHEREAS, In their withdrawal, the troops were under furious attack from the Chinese, yet the Marines and soldiers who withdrew from the reservoir displayed great tenacity by successfully defending against every Chinese attack and destroying or effectively disabling all seven Chinese divisions that tried to block their escape; and

WHEREAS, Although the American forces fighting in the battle were forced to withdraw from the reservoir, the brave troops fought valiantly and, despite being far outnumbered, avoided annihilation and inflicted heavy casualties as approximately 40,000 Chinese troops were either killed or wounded during the campaign; and

WHEREAS, Time magazine once characterized the brutal and savage running fight from the Chosin Reservoir as a "battle unparalleled in U.S. military history" and "an epic of great suffering and great valor;" and

WHEREAS, Despite the heavy losses they endured, the United States Marines consider the Battle of Chosin Reservoir to be one of the proudest moments in the history of the corps; and

WHEREAS, The Chosin fighters, by decimating and halting the Chinese forces in the mountains, enabled the evacuation of 100,000 North Korean men, women, and children, an evacuation which was formally described by the U.S. Government as "the greatest rescue operation in the history of mankind," as never in recorded history had combatants rescued so many enemy civilians in the midst of battle; and

WHEREAS, A total of 17 Medals of Honor and 70 Navy Crosses were awarded for the Chosin campaign, the most ever for a single battle in U.S. military history, in addition to 12 Distinguished Service Crosses and 9,000 Purple Hearts; and

WHEREAS, The Korean War is often referred to as the "Forgotten War," despite the vast numbers of brave and determined soldiers

from New Jersey and across the United States who fought in the conflict, and the thousands who made the ultimate sacrifice defending their country in the struggle against the threat of Communism; and

WHEREAS, Founded in 1983, the Chosin Few is an organization with chapters across the country, including New Jersey, that is comprised of survivors of the Battle of Chosin Reservoir, and consists of members from all of the United States branches of service, as well as South Korean military veterans, former British Marine Commandos, and former Royal Australian Air Force members, whose primary objective is to unite the survivors of the battle into one body of companionship and everlasting remembrance of those who did not survive; and

WHEREAS, It is altogether fitting and proper for a highway to be permanently dedicated to the Chosin Few to serve as a constant reminder of the brave fighting and heroic accomplishments that occurred during the Battle of Chosin Reservoir; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. The Commissioner of Transportation shall designate that portion of State Highway Route No. 35 located in the county of Ocean as the "Chosin Few Memorial Highway" in honor of those soldiers who fought in the Battle of Chosin Reservoir during the Korean War and shall erect appropriate signs bearing this designation.

2. No State or other public funds shall be used for producing, purchasing, or erecting signs bearing the designation established pursuant to section 1 of this act. The Commissioner of Transportation is authorized to receive gifts, grants, or other financial assistance from private sources for the purpose of funding or reimbursing the Department of Transportation for the costs associated with producing, purchasing, and erecting signs bearing the designation established pursuant to section 1 of this act and entering into agreements related thereto, with such private sources, including but not limited to non-governmental non-profit, educational, or charitable entities or institutions. No work shall proceed, and no funding shall be accepted by the Department of Transportation until an agreement has been reached with a responsible party for paying the costs associated with producing, purchasing, erecting, and maintaining the signs.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill designates the portion of State Highway Route No. 35 that runs through Ocean County as the "Chosin Few Memorial Highway" in honor of those soldiers who fought with tremendous bravery and determination in the brutal Battle of Chosin Reservoir during the Korean War.