

CHAPTER 27

AN ACT designating U.S. Route 22 bridge, the Easton-Phillipsburg Toll Bridge, between Phillipsburg, New Jersey and Easton, Pennsylvania as the “Sergeant William John Cahir Memorial Bridge.”

WHEREAS, William John Cahir, a graduate of Pennsylvania State University, worked as a newspaper correspondent for the Express-Times, providing news coverage to Warren and Hunterdon counties in New Jersey and Lehigh and Northampton counties in Pennsylvania, and for Newhouse News Service, during which time his work regularly appeared in numerous New Jersey-based newspapers; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his life, William Cahir was committed to public service, working for United States Senator Edward Kennedy and United States Senator Harris Wofford, and running for Congress in Pennsylvania’s 5th Congressional District in 2008; and

WHEREAS, After the terror attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, William Cahir enlisted in the United States Marine Corps Reserve at the age of 34, where he went to great lengths to obtain an age waiver and eventually rose to the rank of Sergeant; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Cahir was assigned to the 4th Civil Affairs Group, Marine Forces Reserve based in Washington, D.C., completed two tours in Iraq, and in 2009, was deployed for a tour in Afghanistan to support Operation Enduring Freedom; and

WHEREAS, On August 13, 2009, while completing his third tour, Sergeant Cahir was tragically shot and killed by enemy fire while on a dismounted patrol during Eastern Resolve II, a pre-dawn offensive operation in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, that was intended to cut Taliban trade and supply lines in order to allow local residents to vote in the Afghan presidential election; and

WHEREAS, For his heroism, Sergeant Cahir received the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, and other decorations; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Cahir was survived by his wife, Rene, who at the time of his death was pregnant with their twin daughters, Caroline and Elizabeth; and

WHEREAS, The Easton-Phillipsburg Toll Bridge, operated by the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission, connects the counties in New Jersey and Pennsylvania that were served by the newspaper for which Sergeant Cahir reported; and

WHEREAS, It is altogether fitting and proper for the State of New Jersey to honor the life and sacrifice of Sergeant William John Cahir by designating U.S. Route 22 bridge over the Delaware River between Phillipsburg, New Jersey and Easton, Pennsylvania, known as the Easton-Phillipsburg Toll Bridge, as the “Sergeant William John Cahir Memorial Bridge”; now, therefore,

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

1. The Executive Director of the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission shall designate the U.S. Route 22 bridge crossing the Delaware River between Phillipsburg, New Jersey and Easton, Pennsylvania, known as the Easton-Phillipsburg Toll Bridge, as the “Sergeant William John Cahir Memorial Bridge,” and erect appropriate signs bearing this name.

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.

3. This act shall take effect immediately, but shall remain inoperative until the enactment into law of legislation substantially similar to P.L.2014, c.27 by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, but if such legislation shall have been enacted prior to the enactment of this act, this act shall take effect immediately.

Approved August 1, 2014.