

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1798 Session of 2023

INTRODUCED BY BURNS, HILL-EVANS, FREEMAN, KEPHART, HARKINS, JAMES AND T. DAVIS, OCTOBER 27, 2023

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, OCTOBER 30, 2023

AN ACT

1 Designating a bridge, identified as Bridge Key 8345, on that
2 portion of U.S. Route 22 over Howells Run in Cambria
3 Township, Cambria County, as the Michael G. Tsikalas Memorial
4 Bridge; DESIGNATING A BRIDGE, IDENTIFIED AS BRIDGE KEY 8344, <--
5 CARRYING U.S. ROUTE 22 OVER PENNSYLVANIA ROUTE 160, ALSO
6 KNOWN AS NEW GERMANY ROAD, IN CAMBRIA TOWNSHIP, CAMBRIA
7 COUNTY, AS THE CHARLES J. VIZZINI MEMORIAL BRIDGE; AND MAKING
8 A REPEAL.

9 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
10 hereby enacts as follows:

11 Section 1. Michael G. Tsikalas Memorial Bridge.

12 (a) Findings.--The General Assembly finds and declares as
13 follows:

14 (1) Michael G. Tsikalas was born June 3, 1926, in
15 Uniontown.

16 (2) Mr. Tsikalas enlisted in the United States Navy
17 during World War II and was assigned to an amphibious land
18 cruiser, which was one of the first ships to land on Omaha
19 Beach during D-Day.

20 (3) After the war, Mr. Tsikalas worked for more than 40

1 years at the Hi-Way Diner and acted as a guide for many young  
2 men in need or searching for advice.

3 (4) Mr. Tsikalas served as a role model while coaching  
4 grade school football for more than 30 years at both Holy  
5 Name Elementary School and Ebensburg Elementary School.

6 (5) Mr. Tsikalas' devotion to his community included  
7 more than 20 years of service as Mayor of Ebensburg Borough  
8 and Cambria County Prothonotary.

9 (6) As Mayor, Mr. Tsikalas was instrumental in many  
10 improvements, including the Rowena Revitalization Project and  
11 the Ebensburg Main Street Program.

12 (7) Mr. Tsikalas took great joy in administering the  
13 Naturalization Oath of Allegiance to the United States of  
14 America to new American citizens in his position as Cambria  
15 County Prothonotary.

16 (8) Mr. Tsikalas was best known as "Mayor Mike" and  
17 "Coach" to countless members of his community.

18 (9) Mr. Tsikalas passed away on May 18, 2022, after  
19 decades of selfless service to his community.

20 (b) Designation.--The bridge, identified as Bridge Key 8345,  
21 on that portion of U.S. Route 22 over Howells Run in Cambria  
22 Township, Cambria County, is designated the Michael G. Tsikalas  
23 Memorial Bridge.

24 (c) Signs.--The Department of Transportation shall erect and  
25 maintain appropriate signs displaying the name of the bridge to  
26 traffic in both directions on the bridge.

27 SECTION 2. CHARLES J. VIZZINI MEMORIAL BRIDGE. <--

28 (A) FINDINGS.--THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS AND DECLARES AS  
29 FOLLOWS:

30 (1) CHARLES J. VIZZINI WAS BORN MARCH 8, 1924, TO JOHN

1 AND LILLIAN VIZZINI IN COLVER.

2 (2) HE SERVED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY DURING WORLD WAR  
3 II AS A PRIVATE AND WAS WOUNDED TWICE.

4 (3) WHILE FIGHTING IN FRANCE, PRIVATE VIZZINI WAS STRUCK  
5 IN THE CHEST BY BULLETS FROM A GERMAN AUTOMATIC PISTOL AND  
6 WAS SAVED FROM SERIOUS INJURY AND POSSIBLE DEATH BY A  
7 CATHOLIC BIBLE IN HIS LEFT BREAST POCKET AND A CATHOLIC  
8 MISSAL IN HIS RIGHT BREAST POCKET WHEN BULLETS PENETRATED  
9 BOTH BOOKS.

10 (4) AFTER RETURNING TO CAMBRIA COUNTY, MR. VIZZINI WENT  
11 ON TO GRADUATE FROM CAMBRIA ROWE BUSINESS COLLEGE AND LATER  
12 WORKED FOR A TIME AS A COAL MINER AND STEELWORKER, IN THE  
13 EBENSBURG CENTER AND, EVENTUALLY, AT THE OFFICE OF AUDITOR  
14 GENERAL FOR MORE THAN 25 YEARS.

15 (5) A PASSIONATE ADVOCATE FOR HIS FELLOW VETERANS, MR.  
16 VIZZINI SERVED AS COMMANDER OF EBENSBURG POST 4963, VETERANS  
17 OF FOREIGN WARS, AND ORGANIZED ANNUAL VETERANS DAY MEMORIAL  
18 SERVICES AS WELL AS MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR THE ANNIVERSARY OF  
19 THE BOMBING OF PEARL HARBOR AND TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF FELLOW  
20 CAMBRIA COUNTY NATIVE MARINE SERGEANT MICHAEL STRANK, WHO  
21 HELPED TO RAISE THE UNITED STATES FLAG AT IWO JIMA.

22 (6) A CARING MEMBER OF HIS COMMUNITY, MR. VIZZINI  
23 ORGANIZED MEMORIAL SERVICES TO HONOR THE 63 MINERS WHO DIED  
24 IN THE 1940 SONMAN MINES EXPLOSION IN PORTAGE AND WAS  
25 INFLUENTIAL IN HONORING THE 112 INDIVIDUALS WHO LOST THEIR  
26 LIVES IN THE CAMBRIA STEEL COMPANY'S 1902 ROLLING MINE MILL  
27 EXPLOSION IN JOHNSTOWN.

28 (7) MR. VIZZINI WAS WELL-KNOWN THROUGHOUT HIS COMMUNITY,  
29 MOST NOTABLY FOR HIS PASSIONATE ADVOCACY FOR HIS FELLOW  
30 VETERANS AND FOR THE RESIDENTS OF CAMBRIA TOWNSHIP, INCLUDING

1 HIS EFFORTS TO KEEP THE EBENSBURG CENTER OPEN, HIS WORK WITH  
2 EBENSBURG'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS, PARTICULARLY THE  
3 LIFE-SIZE NATIVITY SCENE, HIS ORGANIZATION OF THE NORTHERN  
4 CAMBRIA COUNTY IMMIGRANTS DAY IN NANTY GLO AND HIS EFFORTS TO  
5 CLEAN SANDYVALE CEMETERY.

6 (8) CHARLES J. VIZZINI PASSED AWAY ON AUGUST 11, 2009,  
7 AT THE AGE OF 85.

8 (9) A DECORATED MILITARY VETERAN, MR. VIZZINI'S AWARDS  
9 INCLUDE TWO PURPLE HEARTS AND ONE BRONZE STAR.

10 (B) DESIGNATION.--THE BRIDGE, IDENTIFIED AS BRIDGE KEY 8344,  
11 CARRYING U.S. ROUTE 22 OVER PENNSYLVANIA ROUTE 160, ALSO KNOWN  
12 AS NEW GERMANY ROAD, IN CAMBRIA TOWNSHIP, CAMBRIA COUNTY, IS  
13 DESIGNATED THE CHARLES J. VIZZINI MEMORIAL BRIDGE.

14 (C) SIGNS.--THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SHALL ERECT AND  
15 MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE SIGNS DISPLAYING THE NAME OF THE BRIDGE TO  
16 TRAFFIC IN BOTH DIRECTIONS ON THE BRIDGE AND BOTH DIRECTIONS ON  
17 THE CROSSING ROUTE.

18 SECTION 3. REPEALS.

19 REPEALS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

20 (1) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DECLARES THAT THE REPEAL UNDER  
21 PARAGRAPH (2) IS NECESSARY TO EFFECTUATE THE DESIGNATION  
22 UNDER SECTION 2.

23 (2) SECTION 21 OF THE ACT OF NOVEMBER 3, 2022 (P.L.2028,  
24 NO.140), IS REPEALED.

25 Section ~~2~~ 4. Effective date.

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26 This act shall take effect in 60 days.