
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1262 Session of
2013

INTRODUCED BY KAVULICH, BROOKS, YOUNGBLOOD, O'NEILL, MILLARD,
P. DALEY, FLECK, MAHONEY, COHEN, AUMENT, MARSICO, HENNESSEY,
CALTAGIRONE, BIZZARRO, FARINA, MULLERY, DENLINGER, V. BROWN,
GOODMAN, BOBACK, MAJOR, DEASY, GILLEN AND EVERETT,
APRIL 29, 2013

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, APRIL 29, 2013

AN ACT

1 Designating the bridge crossing the Lackawanna River along 8th
2 Avenue, also known as U.S. Business Route 6, in downtown
3 Carbondale, Lackawanna County, as the 109th Infantry Bridge.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. 109th Infantry Bridge.

7 (a) Findings.--The General Assembly finds and declares as
8 follows:

9 (1) The 109th Infantry Regiment constitutes one of four
10 regiments in the 55th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 28th
11 Infantry Division. Units of this Brigade date back to the
12 American Revolution and were engaged in all the wars of this
13 nation.

14 (2) The 109th Infantry trace their origins to the
15 Scranton City Guards Battalion, National Guard of
16 Pennsylvania, which was constituted and organized on August
17 14, 1877. It was redesignated on September 23, 1878, as the

1 13th Infantry Regiment. The unit was mustered into Federal
2 service on May 12 and 13, 1898, at Mount Gretna,
3 Pennsylvania, as the 13th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry
4 Regiment for the Spanish American War. The unit did not serve
5 outside the continental United States. It was mustered out of
6 Federal service on March 11, 1899, at Augusta, Georgia.

7 (3) On September 26, 1916, the unit was mustered into
8 Federal service at Mount Gretna for service on the Mexican
9 border and was stationed at Camp Stewart, El Paso, Texas. As
10 border patrol operations began to close, the unit continued
11 in Federal service as the United States entered World War I.
12 The unit was drafted into Federal service on August 5, 1917.
13 The unit was consolidated with the 1st Infantry Regiment,
14 which was organized in 1777 and it was reorganized and
15 redesignated as the 109th Infantry Regiment, an element of
16 the 28th Division. The unit was mustered out of Federal
17 service from May 17 through 20, 1919, at Camp Dix, New
18 Jersey, and returned to the Commonwealth's control.

19 (4) The soldiers of the 109th Infantry Regiment earned
20 the nickname "Men of Iron" for the three-day defense against
21 overwhelming odds during the German Army's Champagne-Marne
22 Offensive when the 109th Infantry Regiment was attacked by
23 the German 36th Division. A later German after-action report
24 described the battle as "the most severe defeat of the war."
25 The unit received campaign participation credit for the
26 following: Champagne-Marne, Aisne-Marne, Oise-Aisne, Meuse-
27 Argonne, Champagne 1918 and Lorraine 1918. The regiment had
28 suffered more than 100% casualties from the time it began
29 service in Europe until the signing of the Armistice on
30 November 11, 1918. Fighting was so fierce in some battles

1 that in one case, an entire battalion was left in command of
2 a sergeant. The red "Keystone," the symbol of the
3 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, became the patch of the 28th
4 Division. It was the second official unit patch recognized by
5 the War Department, even though the symbol of the red
6 keystone has been worn on the uniforms of Pennsylvania
7 soldiers since the 1870s.

8 (5) Ten months before the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl
9 Harbor, the 28th Division, including the 109th Infantry
10 Regiment, received orders into Federal service. After the
11 United States entered World War II, the division trained
12 extensively in Pennsylvania, Louisiana, Florida, England and
13 Wales. The 109th became a Regimental Combat Team. It landed
14 in France after D-Day and fought through Normandy, helped
15 liberate Paris and battled through the Hurtgen Forest of
16 Germany. Elements of the Regiment led the Division into the
17 Rhineland to become the first troops to invade German soil
18 since Napoleon and became bitterly engaged in the "West Wall"
19 of Germany. The 109th Infantry paid with human life and blood
20 as they received the following battle honors: Normandy,
21 Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace and Central
22 Europe. They also received the following decorations from
23 foreign governments: the French Croix de Guerre with Palm,
24 streamer embroidered "COLMAR" and the Luxembourg Croix de
25 Guerre, streamer embroidered "LUXEMBOURG."

26 (6) The most noteworthy of the 109th Infantry's
27 achievements during World War II came while the Regiment
28 rested in the Ardennes sector, considered a "quiet" area,
29 early in December 1944. At that time, the German General Von
30 Rundstedt launched the vicious, well-planned battle which

1 became known as the Battle of the Bulge. For eleven days the
2 109th Regimental Combat Team had frustrated the offensive
3 efforts of the German 5th Parachute Division and the 352nd VG
4 Division to seize key terrain and establish a firm southern
5 defense line for the main offensive thrust to seize Antwerp.
6 By December 23, 1944, the 915th Volksgrenadier Regiment,
7 352nd Volksgrenadier (VG) Division, the major foe, had been
8 eliminated by the 109th Regimental Combat Team as a combat
9 organization. Elements of the 914th and 916th Volksgrenadier
10 Regiments also suffered sizeable losses. By December 25,
11 1944, except for the 2nd Battalion, the men of the 109th
12 Infantry began to push back north across the Sure River which
13 they had slowly been pushed through the previous eleven days.
14 They had suffered 1,174 casualties in the battle in just the
15 month of December, almost 40% of their effective strength.

16 (7) Those of the 109th Infantry also underwent
17 mobilization for the Korean War with the 28th Infantry
18 Division, Pennsylvania National Guard, as it reinforced NATO
19 in Germany in 1950. Several Pennsylvania units saw active
20 service in Korea. Additionally, from September 2002 until
21 March 2003, the unit was mobilized in support of Operation
22 Joint Forge in Bosnia-Herzegovina. On January 4, 2005, the
23 battalion mobilized again and was assigned to the 2nd Brigade
24 Combat Team, 28th Infantry Division (Mechanized) which
25 deployed in June 2005 to Al Anbar Province, Iraq, in support
26 of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

27 (8) Since that time, the 109th Infantry has provided
28 assistance to local residents of northeastern Pennsylvania
29 during times of flooding and other natural disasters.
30 Additionally, those in the Regiment continue their job of

1 maintaining their equipment and training for needed future
2 service. Among those who serve at the 109th Infantry
3 Headquarters in Scranton are residents of Carbondale,
4 Berwick, East Stroudsburg, Honesdale, Milton, Williamsport
5 and other areas of Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Wayne, Pike,
6 Lycoming and other northeastern Pennsylvania counties. All of
7 these who serve do so for all of the people of Pennsylvania
8 and the nation and stand proud with the military readiness
9 entrusted them according to the Regiment's motto, "CIVES ARMA
10 FERANT: Let the Citizens Bear Arms."

11 (b) Designation.--Because of the great history, sacrifice
12 and commitment of those who have served in the 109th Infantry
13 Regiment, the bridge crossing the Lackawanna River along 8th
14 Avenue, also known as U.S. Business Route 6, in downtown
15 Carbondale, Lackawanna County, is hereby designated the 109th
16 Infantry Bridge.

17 (c) Signs.--The Department of Transportation shall erect and
18 maintain appropriate signs displaying the name of the bridge to
19 traffic in both directions on the bridge with the infantry's
20 motto "CIVES ARMA FERANT: Let the Citizens Bear Arms" showing on
21 the sign. Additionally, the department shall work with officials
22 of the City of Carbondale and local residents on properly
23 installing the 109th Infantry Regimental Crest with its motto
24 "CIVES ARMA FERANT: Let the Citizens Bear Arms" on the bridge in
25 the future.

26 Section 2. Effective Date.

27 This act shall take effect in 60 days.