
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2433 Session of
2018

INTRODUCED BY SACCONI, READSHAW, HENNESSEY, BURNS, O'NEILL,
DIGIROLAMO, COX, CALTAGIRONE, MALONEY, HILL-EVANS, SONNEY,
DUSH, EMRICK, SOLOMON, MILLARD, BARRAR, HELM, LONGIETTI,
SAINATO, HICKERNELL, REESE, RYAN AND SAYLOR, MAY 23, 2018

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, MAY 23, 2018

AN ACT

1 Designating the future bridge on that portion of Pennsylvania
2 Route 88 over Peters Creek, Finleyville Borough, Washington
3 County, as the John Emerick Memorial Bridge.

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

6 Section 1. John Emerick Memorial Bridge.

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

9 (1) Sergeant John Emerick, a native of Mount Pleasant,
10 Westmoreland County, enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1940.

11 (2) Following the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, Sergeant
12 Emerick was deployed to the Bataan Peninsula, Philippines,
13 initially serving in the 19th Air Base Squadron and later
14 transferring to the 31st infantry unit in an attempt to halt
15 the Japanese advance in the region.

16 (3) With limited food, water and supplies, and following
17 the order of his commander, Sergeant Emerick, along with

1 approximately 12,000 Americans and 63,000 Filipinos,
2 surrendered to Japanese forces as prisoners of war and were
3 forced to march 65 miles through the jungle with no food or
4 water. This march would later be known as the Bataan Death
5 March.

6 (4) Sergeant Emerick survived the death march and 42
7 months of capture and was rescued on September 12, 1945, when
8 United States Forces liberated the prisoners of war.

9 (5) Sergeant Emerick was awarded the Bronze Star with
10 "V" for valor for heroism during combat operations on April
11 6, 1942, on Bataan. His medals included three Bronze Stars, a
12 Purple Heart, three Presidential Unit Citations and a
13 Prisoner of War medal.

14 (6) Following his return to the United States, Sergeant
15 Emerick became a commander in the American Defenders of
16 Bataan and Corregidor, where he was able to assist former
17 prisoners of war in any way he could, including work that led
18 to a study resulting in legislation that would become the
19 former Prisoners of War Benefits Act of 1981.

20 (7) Sergeant Emerick was a 50-year member of the
21 American Legion Post in Finleyville and member of the St.
22 Francis Assisi Church until his death on September 22, 2009.

23 (b) Designation.--The bridge to be constructed on
24 Pennsylvania Route 88 over Peters Creek in Finleyville Borough,
25 Washington County, is designated the John Emerick Memorial
26 Bridge.

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

30 Section 2. Notice.

1 The Secretary of Transportation shall publish a notice in the
2 Pennsylvania Bulletin within 60 days of the completion of the
3 bridge constructed on Pennsylvania Route 88 over Peters Creek in
4 Finleyville Borough, Washington County.

5 Section 3. Effective date.

6 This act shall take effect as follows:

7 (1) The following shall take effect in 60 days:

8 (i) This section.

9 (ii) Section 2.

10 (2) The remainder of this act shall take effect 60 days
11 after publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin of the notice
12 under section 2.