

Altmire and English Announce Bill to Recognize Local Marine Sergeant

(Washington, DC) - In recognition of Sgt. Michael A. Marzano's dedication and service to the nation, U.S. Representatives Jason Altmire (PA-4) and Phil English (PA-3) announced legislation to name the Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic in Hermitage, Pennsylvania in Marzano's honor. The legislation, H.R. 1594, was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives today.

"I am pleased to join with Rep. English in introducing this legislation to honor Marine Corps Sergeant Michael Marzano," said Altmire, who represents a portion of southwest Mercer County. "Michael exemplified the core values of honor, courage and commitment, not only to his fellow Marines, but to a grateful nation and community." Altmire was the lead Democratic cosponsor of the bill.

"The freedom of America has depended upon the courage of men and women within the military for over 200 years," said English, the prime sponsor of the bill. "Marching dutifully into battle, Sergeant Michael Marzano served our country with great honor and distinction. Giving the ultimate sacrifice, we are forever indebted to him. Michael's bravery, patriotism and valiant effort shall not go unnoticed."

A native of Greenville, Pennsylvania, Michael Marzano graduated from Sharon High School in 1995, and went on to pursue his dream of becoming a Marine. Marzano was initially denied entry into the U.S. Marine Corps because of a torn knee ligament that occurred in a high school wrestling tournament his senior year. However, determined to fulfill his dream, Marzano re-applied to the U.S. Marine Corps until he was finally accepted four years later in 1999. After serving on active duty until 2003, Marzano went on to attend Glendale Community College in Phoenix, Arizona and joined a local Marine Reserve unit. In December 2004, Marzano volunteered for a tour of duty in Iraq and joined Ohio's 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment of the 4th Marine Division. Marzano departed for Iraq on March 1, 2005 and served honorably with the 3-35 Weapons Company working as a part of the Mobile Assault Platoon (MAP) 7. On May 8, 2005, 28-year-old Sgt. Michael A. Marzano was killed by a suicide bomber while taking part in an offensive against insurgents in the city of Haditha, Al-Anbar Province, Iraq. He was the first soldier from Mercer County to give his life in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In October 2006, the Butler Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) opened a veterans' outpatient clinic in Hermitage, Pennsylvania. Local veterans from Mercer County called on English to have the new clinic named in honor of Sgt. Marzano's heroism. Today, Altmire, English, and other members of the Pennsylvania delegation took the first step to fulfill the Mercer County veterans' request and introduced H.R. 1594.

"This designation will honor Michael's memory and recognize his bravery and sacrifice," added Altmire. "Michael is representative of all who have worn the uniform proudly, upheld the military's traditions of courage and faithful service, and once stood ready, if duty required it, to make the ultimate sacrifice."