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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 1568 Session of  
2023

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INTRODUCED BY BONNER, CAUSER, GILLEN, GUENST, HADDOCK, JAMES,  
JOZWIAK, KAUFFMAN, KHAN, KINSEY, MOUL, PIELLI, ROWE, SMITH,  
STAATS AND STRUZZI, JULY 18, 2023

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, JULY 18, 2023

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AN ACT

1 Designating a portion of Pennsylvania Route 173 between the  
2 southern border of Slippery Rock Township to the southern  
3 border of Slippery Rock Borough in Slippery Rock Township,  
4 Butler County, as the 173rd Airborne Brigade Highway.

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

7 Section 1. 173rd Airborne Brigade Highway.

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

10 (1) The 173rd Airborne Brigade was constituted in 1917  
11 as an infantry brigade and deployed to France in 1918 as part  
12 of the 87th Division. Upon returning to the United States a  
13 year later, the brigade was demobilized.

14 (2) Redesignated as the 87th Reconnaissance Troop, the  
15 troop fought in three European campaigns. Although not part  
16 of the brigade in World War II, the history of the 503rd  
17 Parachute Infantry Regiment is significant to the 173rd  
18 Airborne Brigade Combat Team, comprising half of its current

1 fighting strength.

2 (3) The 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment was formed in  
3 1941 at Fort Bragg. The regiment jumped into New Guinea in  
4 September 1943 as part of the first successful airborne  
5 combat jump in the Pacific Theater. On February 16, 1945, the  
6 regiment jumped onto the island of Corregidor and earned the  
7 Presidential Unit Citation.

8 (4) The 173rd Infantry Brigade was activated on Okinawa,  
9 Japan, in 1963 as the 173rd Airborne Brigade. The unit earned  
10 the nickname "Sky Soldiers" from the Nationalist Chinese  
11 paratroopers.

12 (5) In 1965, the 173rd Airborne Brigade became the first  
13 major unit of the United States Army to serve in Vietnam. The  
14 unit conducted the only combat parachute jump of the war in  
15 February 1967. During more than six years of continuous  
16 combat, the brigade earned 14 campaign streamers and four  
17 unit citations. Sky Soldiers serving in Vietnam earned 13  
18 Medals of Honor. The brigade was deactivated in 1972.

19 (6) Reactivated in June 2000, the 173rd Airborne Brigade  
20 conducted numerous deployments across Europe. On March 26,  
21 2003, the 173rd Airborne Brigade added to its distinguished  
22 history when nearly 1,000 Sky Soldiers parachuted into Iraq  
23 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom I. During the  
24 operation, one Sky Soldier was awarded the Silver Star.

25 (7) In 2005, the 173rd Airborne Brigade deployed to  
26 Afghanistan along the contentious Pakistan border in support  
27 of Operation Enduring Freedom VI. Five Sky Soldiers were  
28 awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in battle.

29 (8) Upon returning to Italy in 2006, the 173rd Airborne  
30 Brigade transformed into the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat

1 Team. In the spring of 2007, the 173rd Airborne Brigade  
2 Combat Team executed an extended deployment to eastern  
3 Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom VIII,  
4 where soldiers exhibited incredible bravery, earning one  
5 Medal of Honor, one Distinguished Service Cross and 32 Silver  
6 Stars.

7 (9) In 2009, the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team  
8 returned to Afghanistan for a third time in support of  
9 Operation Enduring Freedom X, continuing the team's proud  
10 tradition of selfless service while executing a difficult  
11 build mission south of Kabul.

12 (10) In 2012, the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team  
13 returned to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring  
14 Freedom XIII, returning to Logar and Wardak Provinces, where  
15 they executed the difficult task of reducing the footprint of  
16 the brigade while continuing to train their Afghan  
17 counterparts.

18 (11) Upon returning to Italy in 2013, the 173rd Airborne  
19 Brigade Combat Team was redesignated as the 173rd Airborne  
20 Brigade. Today, Sky Soldiers continue the distinction of  
21 honored service dating back to World War I and proudly  
22 represent the Airborne fighting spirit wherever they serve.

23 (b) Designation.--The portion of Pennsylvania Route 173  
24 between the southern border of Slippery Rock Township to the  
25 southern border of Slippery Rock Borough in Slippery Rock  
26 Township, Butler County, is designated the 173rd Airborne  
27 Brigade Highway.

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

1 Section 2. Effective date.

2 This act shall take effect in 60 days.