

Please contact Tyler Ray, Director of Policy and Advocacy with any questions or for additional information.

Sincerely,

TYLER RAY,
Director of Policy and Advocacy.

NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL ASSOCIATION,
Lowell, MI, May 31, 2018.

RE H.R. 1026.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: We urge your support for the passage of H.R. 1026, the North Country National Scenic Trail Route Adjustment Act, which is scheduled for a floor vote in the House on June 5th.

We ask this on behalf of:

Local communities in northeastern Minnesota and Vermont directly affected by this bill, in order that they enjoy the many economic, recreational and quality of life benefits through this designation of a National Scenic Trail passing through their communities.

The North Country Trail community—now representing over 50,000 hikers, trail builders and trail maintainers—who have worked tirelessly for over 15 years to finally see this legislation passed.

The hundreds of thousands of American families who use the North Country National Scenic Trail to enjoy the many health, recreational and family values benefits of hiking on a National Trail, and being connected with others who call America's northern heartlands home.

This simple bill corrects an oversight perpetuated in the original 1980 authorization of the North Country National Scenic Trail, adjusts its authorized mileage to the more accurate number and in fact saves money by replacing the far more costly original route in Minnesota that required traversing wetlands with world class trail that is mostly already constructed.

Using a proven approach based on a public/private partnership that leverages the public benefit with both sweat equity and private funding, our community needs your support of H.R. 1026 to fully realize the public benefit envisioned by Congress for the North Country National Scenic Trail. We hope we can count on you.

Sincerely,

ANDREA KETCHMARK,
Executive Director.

FALLEN WARRIORS MEMORIAL
GALLERY

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 7, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on the wall in my offices in Washington and Texas, hang pictures, faces, of fallen Texas warriors. These pictures remind all those who visit that freedom comes with a price. One man in southeastern Texas is commemorating the memory of these brave men and women in a unique way.

Ken Pridgeon has a deep respect for the military. He served ten years in the Air Force as an electronics technician, until retiring from the military with a profound appreciation for the sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform.

During his time in the service, he developed his talents as an artist, transforming Sepia tone family pictures into color photos during deployments for his brothers-in-arms. During a time when he was stationed in Florida, he was

even lucky enough to take an art class run by American legend Norman Rockwell.

His artistic abilities led to him taking a job as a billboard artist in the Houston area after his retirement from the Air Force. Suspended 65 feet above the road, Ken painted advertisements on roadside billboards for decades. It was perilous work, but Pridgeon became a master of his profession.

Ken's high esteem for America's servicemen never left him and eventually inspired him to pursue a new project that would combine this respect with his artistic side. Compelled to commemorate the sacrifice of fallen U.S. members of the military in Iraq and Afghanistan, he began to paint portraits of Texans who gave their lives in defense of our country in those conflicts.

What started as merely a side project turned into a full-time calling, as Ken began expanding his collection to servicemen outside of Texas. To date, he has painted 200 portraits of fallen American warriors. He donates a print of each portrait to the family of the portrayed, and he tries to consult them in creating each piece so that he can add personal touches to the painting. Ken often spends up to fourteen hours a day painting, beginning before the crack of dawn and ending well after sundown.

Ken began displaying these portraits in a gallery in Baytown, Texas, his hometown. Recently, he relocated his works to the newly opened Fallen Warriors Memorial gallery on Cutten Road in Houston. These portraits complement the nearby Fallen Warriors Memorial, and now visitors can come face to face with some of the fallen servicemen honored by the memorial in Ken's gallery.

Mr. Speaker, General George Patton once said, "While we mourn the loss of such men, we should thank God that such men ever lived." Ken Pridgeon's paintings provide a fitting tribute to our country's fallen warriors, a rare breed of Americans.

And that's just the way it is.

IN HONOR OF COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR MATTHEW T. BRADY

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 7, 2018

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the service of my personal hero, my brother, Command Sergeant Major Matthew Thomas Brady.

Over thirty-five years ago, Matt began his military career when he enlisted in the U.S. Army National Guard. After completing his basic training at Fort Dix in New Jersey, Matt continued to expand his skill set with Combat Engineer Training at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri and Combat Medic Training at Fort Sam Houston in the great state of Texas.

While serving in the National Guard, Matt earned his Bachelor's Degree, and upon his graduation, he began his active-duty military service in the U.S. Army. Always willing to go where there was a need, Matt's service has taken him across the United States and around the world, from postings in Colorado and Alaska to South Korea and Germany. Matt has served with valor and distinction in multiple conflicts, including Operation Desert

Shield, Operation Desert Storm, and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Matt's distinguished service has not gone unrecognized. He has earned countless awards and honors, including the Legion of Merit with two oak leaf clusters, the Bronze Star with an oak leaf cluster, the Army Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Southwest Asia Service Medal with three Bronze Stars, the Operation Iraqi Freedom Medal with two Bronze Stars, and many others.

Our mother, Nancy, inspired us to have faith, always be optimistic, and to give back. Matt turned this advice into a creed that he followed throughout his storied military career. From his time as a medic to his current role as Command Sergeant Major of the Regional Health Command—Atlantic, Matt has spent most of his career managing healthcare systems to care for our wounded warriors and treat our active duty service members.

After thirty-six years of military service, Matt will begin his hard-earned and well-deserved retirement on September 30, 2018. My brother represents the best of what this country has to offer. Matt; his wife, Christina; and their two children, Matthew and Caitlin, have given so much over the years, and I could not be prouder to pay tribute to my little brother—my hero—and honor his decades of selfless, dedicated service to our family and our country.

INTRODUCING THE STUDENTS
HELPING YOUNG STUDENTS ACT

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 7, 2018

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to re-introduce the Students Helping Young Students Act. This important and bipartisan legislation would provide an additional pathway to enable students to work their way through college, while at the same time enhancing the afterschool opportunities of their younger peers.

The Students Helping Young Students Act would incorporate work at afterschool programs into the Federal Work-Study program. Encouraging students enrolled in higher education to work with vulnerable younger students is a win-win, expanding opportunities for students at colleges and universities to participate in afterschool programs for at-risk youth. The bill creates new paths to achievement and opportunities for students at all levels, a commonsense way to improve our nation's education system.

The hours between 3 p.m.—7 p.m., when children are out of school but parents are not yet home from work, can be a critical time for children, families, and communities. Mentoring and afterschool programs can play a key role in filling this gap. Unfortunately, too few at-risk students have the opportunity to participate in these programs. While not a panacea, afterschool and mentoring programs have been associated with improved educational outcomes, reduced negative behaviors, increased school attendance, and improved social and emotional development.

At the same time, as college costs continue to rise, the Federal Work-Study program provides a key source of financing for students to