

Submitter: Jason Lacarney
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: SCR213

I had the privilege to serve with Kenny Leiston in the pre deployment train up and the actual deployment to Iraq in 2004, during that time, I built a solid friendship with Kenny.

Kenny and I spent hours and hours, talking he was very excited about returning home, going to college and studying psychology, he had a particular interest in becoming a criminal profiler. One thing I can say, I noticed about Kenny early on was he was definitely wise beyond his years and that kid was going to go places.

One thing, Kenny possessed that not many young men his age did not was 100% drive and commitment to everything he did, whether the probability was, he was going to succeed, or the probability was, he was going to fail did not matter, when he set his mind to it, he gave it 100% no matter what.

That attitude defined his service. Kenny was always the first to volunteer to go outside the wire, we could be handing out candy and water to children or, tracking down some of the most hardened insurgents, which would surely end in a firefight, the nature of the mission did not matter to him, because he believed wholeheartedly that he was doing good, and his actions would and still to this day do have meaning. Kenny was one of those people no matter how bad the situation was, could always find a way to make it better, and probably slightly humorous. The entire platoon changed the day. Kenny was taken, one of the only light spots had gotten a little dimmer. I honestly still to this day think about Kenny and wonder what he would've become if he would've had the chance.

I believe that Kenny deserves to be memorialized by the proposed sign, for if nothing else, those of us who knew him will always be reminded of him when we drive-by, and remember the good times we had with him, he was a soul that was taken too soon.