

## GOVERNOR CUOMO DIRECTS FLAGS AT HALF-STAFF TO HONOR POLICE OFFICER CRAIG LEHNER

### *Niagara Falls and Peace Bridge to be Illuminated in Blue for Fallen Officer*

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today directed that flags on all state government buildings be flown at half-staff on Wednesday, October 25 to honor Buffalo Police Officer Craig Lehner, who died in the line of duty while training with the underwater recovery team. To commemorate the life of Officer Lehner, the Peace Bridge and Niagara Falls in Western New York will also be illuminated blue on Wednesday evening.

"This exceptional law enforcement officer, who was taken from us far too soon, will always be remembered in Western New York and beyond," **Governor Cuomo said.**

"The family of New York grieves for Officer Craig Lehner, who devoted his life to serving and protecting the people of this state, and asks that everyone keep his loved ones and colleagues in their prayers during this difficult time."

"On behalf of our deeply saddened community and state, and as a fellow resident of Buffalo, I would like to extend my most sincere condolences to the family and friends of Officer Lehner, a true hometown hero," **said Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul.** "His death is a reminder of the daily dangers that law enforcement face in the line of duty. His selfless service to country and community touches all of us in Buffalo and beyond."

At 34-years-old, Officer Lehner was a nine-year veteran of the Buffalo Police Department. In addition to serving on the department's underwater recovery team, Lehner worked as a K-9 officer with his partner Shield, a 4-year-old German shepherd. Lehner also served as an Army National Guard military police officer for 16 years, assigned to the 105th military Police Company at Masten Armory in Buffalo. A staff sergeant, he was deployed to Iraq in 2011 and served at Guantanamo Bay detention facility in Cuba in 2014 until 2015. During his time in the service, he was awarded more than a dozen medals, including the Army Commendation Medal, Air Assault Badge, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal and five Army Achievement Medals.

On the day Officer Lehner is laid to rest, the Peace Bridge will be illuminated in blue along the bridge arches, truss, and spine. The lights will commence at dusk on Wednesday, October 25 and will continue until 1 a.m. The 176-foot Niagara Falls will also be awash in blue light for 15 minutes, at the top of every hour, from 7 - 11 p.m. to commemorate the life of Officer Craig Lehner.

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