



House Office Building, 9 South
Lansing, Michigan 48909
Phone: 517/373-6466

KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL HIGHWAY

House Bill 5996 as introduced First Analysis (10-4-00)

Sponsor: Rep. Judith Scranton
Committee: Transportation

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

The Livingston County Veterans, a county association of all of the veterans' groups, and the Livingston County Board of Commissioners has requested that a portion of highway M-59 be named in honor of the 50th anniversary of the Korean War. Legislation has been introduced to do this.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would create a new act to name a portion of highway M-59 beginning at the county line of Livingston and Oakland Counties on the east and extending west to Interstate 96, as the "Korean War 50th Anniversary Memorial Highway". The bill would require the Department of Transportation to erect suitable markers indicating the name of the highway when sufficient private collections were received to completely cover the cost of the markers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Public Act 240 of 1991 designated highway M-59, between Howell on the east and highway M-3 near Mount Clemens on the west (except for the portion of M-59 between Pontiac and Utica) "the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Highway."

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

The House Fiscal Agency says the bill would have no fiscal impact. (9-29-00)

ARGUMENTS:

For:

The state has a long history of memorializing highways, dating back at least to 1919. Highway memorialization has been a particularly popular form of honoring various veterans' groups, and the bill would continue in this tradition by naming a portion of M-59 in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Korean War. Designating a portion of a highway is a visible way for the state to recognize and honor the service and

commitment of veterans to their state and nation. Veterans of military service have expressed concern that young people seem to have no understanding of wartime sacrifice, and legislation such as this provides an opportunity to promote that understanding.

Against:

The highway in question already has been statutorily designated as "the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Highway." Would the proposed designation of the highway in the bill supercede this designation? Moreover, since the Korean conflict never was officially designated a war by Congress, technically the proposed name actually would be a misnomer.

Response:

Reportedly, the effect of the bill, if enacted, would be a dual designation and not a cancellation of the earlier designation of the highway in memory of the Vietnam War veterans. Moreover, even if Congress never officially declared war in Korea (which was a United Nations operation), that is what the conflict is known as popularly, and it is that general public understanding that the proposed name would reflect.

POSITIONS:

There are no positions on the bill.

Analyst: J. Hunault/S. Ekstrom

#This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.