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GARY PRIESS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY

Senate Bill 615 as passed by the Senate
First Analysis (12-11-01)

Sponsor: Sen. Valde Garcia
House Committee: Transportation
Senate Committee: Transportation and
Tourism

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

Periodically, stretches of highway are re-named to memorialize prominent Michigan residents or to commemorate historical events. Because of his impact on state policy and highway safety for all citizens, it has been suggested that a portion of highway be renamed for Gary Priess, a Dewitt Township police officer killed in the line of duty.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

Senate Bill 615 (S-1) would name a portion of the US-127 highway the "Gary Priess Memorial Highway." The segment to be named begins at the Ingham County/Clinton County border and extends north to the Price Road exit in Clinton County.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

The House Fiscal Agency notes that the bill would amend Public Act 142 of 2001, the recently enacted Michigan Memorial Highway Act. Section 2 of the act indicates that the Department of Transportation places suitable signs to name the highway "when sufficient private contributions are received to completely cover the cost to erect and maintain those markers." As a result, the bill has no state or local fiscal impact. (12-7-01)

The Senate Fiscal Agency notes that private funds required for the cost of the markers would depend on the size of the markers. Per-marker costs, including installation, could range from \$820 to \$1,090. (11-20-01)

ARGUMENTS:

For:

This bill would provide recognition for a highly regarded citizen of Michigan who sacrificed his life

while serving his community. Officer Gary Priess was a Dewitt Township police officer whose car was struck by a semi-truck while he conducted a traffic stop. A husband and father of two children, Priess served for 18 years on the Dewitt Township force. A much-loved member of the community, nearly 1,000 people attended Officer Priess's funeral. In response to his death and those of other emergency highway workers, a law was enacted last year to protect police officers and others who work on the shoulders of busy roadways. Under Public Act 458 of 2000, cars or trucks approaching an emergency or police vehicle on the side of the road must move over one lane or, if unable to safely do so, slow down to cautiously pass the emergency vehicle.

POSITIONS:

There are no positions on the bill.

Analyst: J. Hunault

■ 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.

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