

Legislative Analysis



ARMY SERGEANT FIRST CLASS MICHAEL CATHCART MEMORIAL HIGHWAY

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Senate Bill 169 (H-1) as reported from House committee

Analysis available at
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Sponsor: Sen. Kevin Daley

1st House Committee: Transportation

2nd House Committee: Ways and Means

Senate Committee: Transportation and Infrastructure

Complete to 9-3-19

(Enacted as Public Act 51 of 2019)

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 169 would amend the Michigan Memorial Highway Act to designate the portion of highway M-15 beginning at the intersection of M-15 and Cass Avenue Road in Portsmouth Charter Township and extending north to the intersection of M-15 and Ridge Road in the city of Bay City as the "Army Sergeant First Class Michael Cathcart Memorial Highway."

The bill would take effect 90 days after being enacted.

Proposed MCL 250.2084

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

According to committee testimony and news reports, Sergeant First Class Michael Cathcart was born July 26, 1983, in Bay City, Michigan. His family members would say that "from the moment he was a young boy, he was a soldier who carried his head high and made his loved ones feel protected."

A 2001 Bay Central High School graduate, Sergeant Cathcart joined the Army as a fire support specialist less than two weeks after his high school graduation. Upon completion of Army basic combat and advanced individual training, he reported to the 101st Airborne Division, better known as the Screaming Eagles. He served there for five years. As a member of the 101st Airborne, he frequently reassured his mother and sister through emails and telephone calls that he would return home from war as his division moved from Kuwait to Iraq. He wrote in one email to his mother, "I have another mission tonight, wish me luck, and don't worry."

Sergeant Cathcart served in Iraq in 2003 and 2005. In 2007 he volunteered for Special Forces (Green Berets), and in 2009 he joined the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, as a senior engineer sergeant.

On Friday November 14, 2014, Sergeant First Class Michael Cathcart died of the wounds he received from small arms fire during a dismounted combat operation in Kunduz Province, Afghanistan. He was 31 years old. Sergeant Cathcart was the recipient of many

awards, including three Bronze Star Medals, two Purple Heart Medals, and four Army Commendation Medals.

Dedicating a portion of highway M-15 to Sergeant First Class Michael Cathcart would recognize and honor his sacrifice to our county, our state, and his community.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Section 2 of the Michigan Memorial Highway Act indicates that the state transportation department shall provide for the erection of suitable markers indicating the name of the highway only “when sufficient private contributions are received to completely cover the cost of erecting and maintaining those markers.” As a result, the bill has no state or local fiscal impact.

POSITIONS:

The Michigan Department of Transportation indicated a neutral position on the bill.
(6-12-19)

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