

Legislative Analysis



LANCE CORPORAL JUSTIN ELLSWORTH MEMORIAL HIGHWAY

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House Bill 5267 as reported from committee

Sponsor: Rep. Ryan Berman

1st Committee: Transportation

2nd Committee: Ways and Means

Complete to 6-24-20

(Enacted as Public Act 226 of 2020)

SUMMARY:

House Bill 5267 would amend the Michigan Memorial Highway Act to designate the portion of highway US-127 in Isabella County that begins at the exit to the US-127 business route through Mount Pleasant and extends north to the Pickard Road exit as the “Lance Corporal Justin Ellsworth Memorial Highway.”

Proposed MCL 250.2050

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

According to committee testimony and the Honor the Fallen website, Justin Mark Ellsworth was born on July 26, 1984, and grew up in Wixom and Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. He had always wanted to be a Marine and enlisted in the Marine Corps shortly after graduating from Mt. Pleasant High School in 2003. He was assigned to Combat Services Support Battalion 1, Combat Service Support Group 11, 1st Force Service Support Group, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, California. He was trained in handling explosives and was part of a reconnaissance force that helped to evacuate civilians from Fallujah in Iraq.

On November 13, 2004, while conducting a dismounted combat patrol southeast of Fallujah, Lance Corporal Justin Ellsworth received a metal detector reading that indicated a possible improvised explosive device. Once positively identified, he sounded the warning for his fellow Marines to clear the area. Seconds later, the improvised explosive device was detonated by the enemy, mortally wounding Lance Corporal Justin Ellsworth. He was 20 years old.

Dedicating a portion of highway US-127 in Isabella County would be an appropriate way to honor his life, his dedication to his community, and his sacrifice for our country.

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.

POSITION:

The Department of Transportation indicated a neutral position on the bill. (6-24-20)

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