

Legislative Analysis



SERGEANT MATTHEW R. SOPER MEMORIAL HIGHWAY

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House Bill 5570 as referred to second committee

Sponsor: Rep. Julie Alexander

1st Committee: Transportation

2nd Committee: Ways and Means

Complete to 6-24-20

SUMMARY:

House Bill 5570 would amend the Michigan Memorial Highway Act to designate the portion of highway M-60 in Jackson County beginning at Fairway Drive and continuing west to Emerson Road as the "Sergeant Matthew R. Soper Memorial Highway."

Proposed MCL 250.1106

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

According to committee testimony and the Fallen Heroes Project, Sergeant Matthew Soper was born to Warner and Shirley Soper on July 27, 1981. He was a football and basketball player who spent two years at Jackson Lumen Christi High School. Sergeant Soper later earned his GED and soon after became a National Guardsman representing his home state of Michigan. After nearly a year of fighting in Iraq with 1462nd Transportation Company of Howell, Sergeant Soper returned home in 2005 to a homecoming celebration with family and friends. He spent some time in Kalamazoo, taking classes at Kalamazoo Valley Community College, when he was called for a second tour of duty in Bayji, Iraq, in June 2006. Sergeant Soper was among 299 soldiers mobilized in Jackson with the 1461st Transportation Company—a truck driving unit transporting heavy equipment transport. The 1461st was expected to return to Michigan in August 2007. On June 6, 2007, an improvised explosive device struck his vehicle. Sergeant Soper died of his injuries. He was 25 years old.

Dedicating a portion of highway M-60 in Jackson County to the memory of Sergeant Matthew R. Soper would be an appropriate way to honor his service to his community and his sacrifice to our state and our nation.

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 Department of Transportation indicated a neutral position on the bill. (6-23-20)

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