

Legislative Analysis



TROOPER JOEL E. POPP MEMORIAL HIGHWAY AND OFFICER LEROY IMUS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY

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House Bill 5717 as enacted

Public Act 166 of 2024

Sponsor: Rep. Amos O’Neal

Committee: Transportation, Mobility and Infrastructure

Complete to 1-16-25

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 5717 amends the Michigan Memorial Highway Act to designate highway I-75 from Willard Road to Riverview Road in Saginaw County as the “Trooper Joel E. Popp Memorial Highway.”

In addition, the bill designates highway M-53 in Macomb County, from its intersection with 18 Mile Road to the Hall Road (highway M-59) interchange, as the “Officer Leroy Imus Memorial Highway.” Subject to sufficient funding (described below), signs designating the location of the memorial highway must be placed as follows:

- At the northbound intersection of M-53 and 18 Mile Road.
- On the southern side of the southbound intersection of M-53 and 20 Mile Road. (In Macomb County, 20 Mile Road is named Hall Road, as referenced above.)

Finally, the bill repeals section 30c of the act, which was added by 2024 PA 91, and which designated M-53 from 17 Mile Road to Hall Road as the “Officer Leroy Imus Memorial Highway.”

Proposed MCL 250.2105a

BACKGROUND:

Trooper Joel E. Popp

According to committee testimony, MLive, and the Michigan State Police, Joel Popp enlisted with the Michigan State Police in January 2020 and was assigned to the Tri-City Post.

On the evening of Wednesday, January 24, 2024, Trooper Popp and other troopers were investigating a suspected impaired driver stopped in a curved lane of traffic on I-75 near Birch Run. While investigating, Trooper Popp was standing outside his patrol vehicle when another motorist struck him and two patrol cars. Trooper Popp was taken to Hurley Medical Center in Flint, where he later died of his injuries. He was the fifty-sixth Michigan State Police trooper to die in the line of duty. He was 39 years old.

Designating a portion of I-75 to the memory of Trooper Joel E. Popp recognizes his sacrifice and honors his commitment and dedication of service to the citizens of his community and to the state Michigan.

Officer Leroy Imus

According to committee testimony and online sources, Leroy Imus was born in Howell on November 11, 1939. He proudly served in the United States Navy as a TM3 trained to handle torpedoes, missiles, and anti-submarine rockets. After an honorable discharge, Imus joined the Sterling Heights Police Department on September 12, 1966. During his five years as a Sterling Heights police officer, Officer Imus attended and graduated from the Northwestern School of Police Staff and Command, received several merits and departmental citations, and was named “Policeman of the Month.”

In the early morning hours of December 2, 1971, Officer Imus made a routine traffic stop on the M-53 expressway north of 18 Mile Road. As Officer Imus was returning to his patrol car, a vehicle swerved out of its travel lane, striking him and his patrol car, then fled. Officer Imus died of his injuries. He was 32 years old.

Designating a portion of M-53 in Macomb County to the memory of Officer Leroy Imus would be an appropriate way to honor his service and dedication to his community, our state, and our nation.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Michigan Memorial Highway Act indicates that the state transportation department shall provide for the erection of suitable markers indicating the highway name 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.

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