

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SJM 8008

As Passed House:
February 29, 2024

Brief Description: Designating mileposts 45 to 51 of state route number 6 as the Washington state patrol trooper Justin R. Schaffer memorial highway.

Sponsors: Senator Wilson, J..

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/15/24, 2/21/24 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/29/24, 92-0.

Brief Summary of Joint Memorial

- Requests the Washington State Transportation Commission to commence proceedings to designate a section of State Route 6 in Lewis County as the "Washington State Patrol Trooper Justin R. Schaffer Memorial Highway."

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Fey, Chair; Donaghy, Vice Chair; Paul, Vice Chair; Timmons, Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Hutchins, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Low, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Robertson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Berry, Bronoske, Chapman, Cortes, Dent, Doglio, Duerr, Entenman, Goehner, Griffey, Hackney, Klicker, Mena, Nance, Orcutt, Ramel, Ramos, Schmidt, Volz and Walsh.

Staff: Christine Thomas (786-7142).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

State Highway Facility Naming.

The Washington State Transportation Commission (Commission) is responsible for naming state transportation facilities, including state highways, bridges, rest areas, and other state highway facilities. The Commission's policy states, "A naming is done in a thorough and deliberative manner to honor and institute an enduring memory of a person or group of people who have contributed significantly to the well-being of the state or nation, and with the widespread support of the people from the area in which the facility is located."

For the Commission to consider a proposal, the requesting entity must provide sufficient evidence indicating community support and acceptance of the proposal. This evidence can include a letter of support from the state or federal legislator representing the area encompassing the facility to be renamed. Other evidence that can provide proof of community support includes a resolution passed by other elected bodies in the impacted area, support from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and supportive action from a local organization such as a chamber of commerce.

If a naming request is submitted for a person who has recently died, the Commission does not act on the request for at least 12 months after the date of passing to allow for a respectful period of mourning and reflection.

Upon passage of a joint memorial requesting the naming of a facility, the Commission holds a public hearing prior to taking action. After the Commission takes final action in naming a state transportation facility, the WSDOT designs and installs the appropriate signs.

Washington State Patrol Trooper Justin R. Schaffer.

Washington State Patrol Trooper Justin R. Schaffer served with the Washington State Patrol for more than six years beginning in September 2014. Trooper Schaffer became a Drug Recognition Expert in 2016, then partnered with narcotics K9 Frankie in 2018. On March 24, 2020, Trooper Schaffer was fatally struck by a vehicle while attempting to deploy spike strips to stop a fleeing armed robbery suspect.

Summary of Joint Memorial:

The memorialists request that the Commission commence proceedings to designate the section of State Route 6 that traverses Lewis County from milepost 45 to milepost 51, as the "Washington State Patrol Trooper Justin R. Schaffer Memorial Highway."

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) State Trooper Justin R. Schaffer was a local son who graduated from Adna

High School and Centralia College with a degree in criminal justice. He followed in his father's footsteps by going into public service and became a Washington State Patrol (WSP) officer at his father's recommendation. He served in the community that he grew up in and was so proud to be a part of. Trooper Schaffer made the most of his time with the WSP where he was afforded many opportunities and made to feel welcome, appreciated, and part of the WSP family. Justin Schaffer was dedicated to his work and respected among his peers. He had a bright future that may have included serving at the executive level with the WSP.

Trooper Schaffer died in the line of duty protecting his community. It was his job to serve his community and his service should not be forgotten. He is well deserving of being honored, because he lost his life way too soon serving the citizens of the state. The six miles of remembrance commemorates his six years of service with the WSP, and is a great honor and memorialization of Trooper Schaffer.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Jeff Wilson, prime sponsor; Glenn Schaffer; and Chief John Batiste, Washington State Patrol.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.