

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJM 4016

As Passed House:
February 13, 2020

Brief Description: Requesting to commence proceedings in naming state route number 902 the Gold Star Memorial Highway.

Sponsors: Representatives Riccelli, Volz, Graham, Fey, Lovick, Valdez, Maycumber, Leavitt, Tarleton, Shea and Ormsby.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/30/20, 2/5/20 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/13/20, 98-0.

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requests to name State Route 902 the Gold Star Memorial Highway.
--

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 31 members: Representatives Fey, Chair; Wylie, 1st Vice Chair; Slatter, 2nd Vice Chair; Valdez, 2nd Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Young, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boehnke, Chambers, Chapman, Dent, Doglio, Duerr, Dufault, Entenman, Eslick, Goehner, Gregerson, Irwin, Kloba, Lovick, McCaslin, Mead, Orcutt, Ortiz-Self, Paul, Ramos, Riccelli, Shewmake, Van Werven and Volz.

Staff: Megan McPhaden (786-7114)

Background:

The Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) is responsible for naming state transportation facilities, including highways and bridges. It is the WSTC's stated policy that a naming must commemorate a person or group of people who significantly contributed to the state or nation's well-being. A facility naming must be thoroughly and deliberately conducted and must be widely supported by people from the area.

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

There are two processes for initiating the naming of a state transportation facility:

1. The Legislature may pass a Joint Memorial requesting the WSTC name or rename a facility. Following enactment of a Joint Memorial, the WSTC holds a public hearing as soon as possible to allow for public input prior to taking action.
2. The Legislature, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), state and local government entities, citizen organizations, and any person may contact the WSTC establishing their interest in a naming. The requesting party must provide sufficient evidence indicating community support and acceptance of the proposal. This evidence may include a letter of support from the state or federal legislator representing the area encompassing the facility to be renamed. Other evidence that may provide proof of community support includes a resolution passed by other elected bodies in the impacted area, support by the WSDOT, and supportive action from a local organization such as a chamber of commerce.

After the WSTC takes final action, the WSDOT designs and installs the appropriate signs.

Summary of Bill:

The Senate and the House of Representatives request that the WSTC commence proceedings to name State Route 902 the Gold Star Memorial Highway.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) It is appropriate to designate State Route 902 as the Gold Star Memorial Highway. This is a small but important gesture to recognize the sacrifices of our fallen heroes and to honor the Gold Star families who suffer. This highway leads to the Washington State Veterans Cemetery and would reaffirm to veterans and the families of veterans that their losses are recognized.

Gold Star families are those who lost family members to war or to complications from war. The term Gold Star originated in World War I when military families would hang a blue star in their windows. If they lost a family member in service they would change that blue star to gold. The Gold Star is a symbol of sacrifice and support.

There are many military families in the Spokane area and there is overwhelming support for this designation from the community and various organizations.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Riccelli, prime sponsor; Representative Volz; Tilinda Grote, Northwest Region Gold Star Wives; P.J. Braun, Missing In America Project; Charles Wharton, AMVETS Department of Washington; Rudy Lopez, Eastern Washington Veterans Task Force; and Paul Manly, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.