

Ladies and gentlemen of the committee,

June 3rd, 2013 is a day that no one who knew Justin will ever forget. A family lost their son and brother, the military lost an outstanding young leader, the community lost an upstanding citizen, and for me I lost my best friend. Justin and I met during our freshman year of high school at Blue Valley West out on the football practice field. In the following years, we became brothers. One thing I would like to share with you is Justin's passion for history. He recognized the importance of lessons learned from the past, understanding the ideas from long ago, and applying those lessons and ideas to his life as he continued to move forward.

I am in favor of Bill SB5. This bill does not just honor an amazing soldier, son, and member of the community, but also reflects the spirit of who Justin was as a man. Highways are used all over this country as a means of moving forward. Whether it's the transportation of goods for our economy or for personal reason, highways allow us to move forward in our lives. This portion of 69 Highway was the portion most often used by Justin during his time in Kansas, a fitting tribute to honor the man that paid the ultimate sacrifice for all of us. It would be a wonderful gift to give those of us who had the pleasure of knowing him and a reminder to those who still reside in Overland Park and use HWY 69 that his sacrifice did not go unnoticed. Every time they drive by that sign they can look back into the past, as they move forward on their road of life, and remember the reasons they are still there.

Our lives have been protected and ensured by Justin's sacrifices; his sacrifice of joining the military, his sacrifice of choosing to deploy over going to college, his sacrifice of becoming an officer and leading his men on his second deployment, and the ultimate sacrifice he paid when he was taken from us one year and seven months ago.

How do you truly honor America's fallen heroes? By voting 'Yes' on bills like Bill SB5, because this isn't just about one man and one community, but a reminder to all who pass that sign of the sacrifices being made every day by our service members.

I greatly appreciate the time that has been taken to consider this bill. I wish you all the best. God bless.

Karle Hamer