

There's a part of 69 Highway in Overland Park that's well known to students and staff at Blue Valley West High School. It's the route many take to the school each day, it's the same highway I drove as a student back in 2006 and it is the same stretch Justin Sisson drove countless times.

You and your fellow lawmakers have a chance to make this stretch of highway from 135<sup>th</sup> Street to 167<sup>th</sup> Street something meaningful. Placing a sign along the road gives drivers a reason to pause, even just for a moment, and recognize that freedom is something we should cherish every day. That freedom is what 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Justin Lee Sisson fought and died for.

On this past Memorial Day, Governor Brownback issued a statement saying in part, "we owe a debt to our Soldiers whose diligence and bravery makes our world a safer place...Our country is greater because of their service and sacrifice." Justin served in the Army so thousands of others can drive down that stretch of highway, and all other roads in Kansas, with a sense of security. Justin defended our country because that's what he wanted to do.

Justin was the kind of man more Kansans and Americans should strive to be like. He was one of the most driven and kind people I've had the opportunity to know. I want the highway leading to his old school to serve as a tribute to him. He deserves it.

It's important to recognize him in Kansas because this is his home. Justin spent more than half of his life in Kansas. This is where he came home to after his first tour of duty in Iraq. Kansas is where he wanted to be buried.

Most Kansans may not ever make it up to Leavenworth National Cemetery to visit Justin's grave. Many may never see his battlefield cross in front of Blue Valley West High School. And only a few may notice his picture on a traveling display of fallen soldiers from Kansas. But thousands will see his name on a sign along 69 Highway.

While **we** will never forget Justin, my hope is dedicating this stretch of highway will show many that someone who drove that same highway was courageous, compassionate and a role model.

-Meredith Miller