

Senator Melcher and Transportation Committee members,

Thank you for presenting Bill SB5 to the Senate. Justin was a one of a kind person. The kind you only meet once in a lifetime, if you are fortunate. I could speak his praises at length but I will try to be succinct.

I had the privilege and honor of serving with Justin, as his Platoon Sergeant, during a deployment to Mosul, Iraq. We were assigned to the Florida Army National Guard, 779th Engineer Battalion's, Protective Services Detachment (PSD). At the time, Justin was 19 years old, held the rank of Private First Class and was attending the ROTC program at the Florida State University. When our unit was mobilized to support the Global War on Terror, Justin volunteered to deploy. He wanted to gain the combat experience of being an enlisted Soldier because he knew the experience would be invaluable later when he became a Commissioned Officer. Justin was not only noble but was extremely loyal as well. During the deployment process, Justin declined an appointment to West Point because he had already committed to the deployment.

While serving in Iraq, Justin exemplified the Army Values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. He was a consummate professional and excelled in every task. His dedication to duty and unwavering drive to be successful earned him a Bronze Star medal.

When the deployment was over, Justin turned his focus to graduating from college and leading his ROTC, Ranger Challenge program to become one of the nation's best. He graduated with the distinction of being among the nation's top 10 percent and earned a coveted commission as an Infantry officer in the United States Army. In his short military career, Justin accomplished many things that others could not. He successfully completed some of the most challenging training the Army has to offer and became Ranger, Sapper, Airborne and Air Assault qualified.

Justin exemplified what was right in the United States of America. Justin was among the best and brightest. He gave me hope for the future of our country. I

took comfort in knowing there are other young men, of Justin's caliber, who will lead our Nation in the future. I believe Justin was destined to accomplish great feats in life. Unfortunately, we will never know the full depth and breadth of losing Justin as he is no longer able to accomplish the great things he was destined to accomplish.

Designating a portion of U.S. highway 69 as the 2nd Lieutenant Justin L. Sisson memorial highway is certainly an honor befitting a great man and Justin was a great man. Passing Bill SB5 will benefit future generations because it will encourage them to learn about Justin's story. It will inspire others to live the way he did. It will preserve a reverence for our military and pay tribute to the sacrifices they make. Finally, it will serve as a reminder of the men and women that make the United States of America great.

Again, thank you for carefully considering Bill SB5.

Respectfully,

Ron O'Brien

Tallahassee, Florida