

SESSION OF 2015

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON SENATE BILL NO. 127

As Amended by Senate Committee on
Transportation

Brief*

SB 127 would require the Secretary of Transportation, before placing any signs commemoratively designating any highway, bridge, interchange, or trail, to receive sufficient money from gifts and donations to cover the costs of placing such signs plus an additional 50 percent of the initial cost to defray future maintenance or replacement costs. The Secretary would be authorized to accept gifts and donations toward those costs.

The bill also would designate three portions of highway:

- The 2nd Lieutenant Justin L Sisson Memorial Highway, a portion of U.S. 69 in Johnson County that would begin at 135th Street and continue to 167th Street;
- The George Ablah Expressway, on K-96, from the junction of K-96 and I-35, east to the junction of K-96 and Rock Road, in Sedgwick County. The bill would remove from that portion of K-96 the designation of Bonnie Huy Memorial Highway. The portion of K-96 from the junction of K-96 and Rock Road in Sedgwick County, east to the junction with I-35 would be designated as the Bonnie Huy Memorial Highway; and
- The Kenneth W Bernard Memorial Highway, on K-7 in Lansing. The bill would remove from that portion

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

of K-7 the designation of the Amelia Earhart Memorial Highway. The portion of K-7 north to the southern city limits of Lansing, then north from the northern city limits of Lansing to the eastern junction with US-159 would be designated as the Amelia Earhart Memorial Highway.

The provisions related to payments for signs would apply to the new designations.

Background

Senator Wolf requested requested the bill and testified as a proponent in the Senate Transportation Committee. She stated the bill would place policy into statute and alleviate confusion when requests for such signs are made. The state signing engineer from the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) also testified in support of the bill, saying it would provide a consistent and fair treatment of signage requests.

The language of the original bill has been included in each commemorative designation statute enacted since 2004.

The Senate Transportation Committee amended the bill to add the contents of SB 5, as amended, and SB 68, as amended.

SB 5. The bill was introduced by Senator Melcher.

According to testimony in the Senate Transportation Committee, Justin Sisson was a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army assigned to the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1-506th Infantry. Before earning an Army Officer Commission at Florida State University, he was an enlisted member of the Army National Guard and received a Bronze Star for his service during a deployment to Iraq. Upon commissioning, he graduated with

honors from the U.S. Army Infantry Basic Officer Leadership Course; he also was a graduate of the U.S. Army's Ranger, Sapper, Air Assault, and Airborne schools.

Also according to testimony, 2nd Lieutenant Sisson was killed in action on June 3, 2013, while conducting combat operations in Afghanistan. He was a graduate of Pleasant Ridge Middle School and Blue Valley West High School before joining the U.S. Army.

Oral testimony in support of the bill was provided by the soldier's father, family friends, and a fellow service member who served with Justin. Additional written testimony was provided by family members, friends, community members, and fellow soldiers.

The Senate Committee amended the bill by adding a funding mechanism so the Secretary of Transportation could accept gifts and donations to aid in obtaining and installing suitable signs. The bill also was amended to specify the signs will not be placed until the Secretary has received sufficient moneys from gifts and donations to reimburse the cost of placing such signs and an additional 50 percent of the initial cost to defray future maintenance or replacement costs of such signs.

SB 68. The bill was requested by Senators O'Donnell, Peterson, and Wagle. In the Senate Transportation Committee, Senator O'Donnell spoke in favor of the bill, stating Mr. Ablah was a successful businessman who donated land to Wichita. Senator Peterson also spoke in favor of the bill, stating Mr. Ablah believed in the importance of infrastructure. There was no opponent or neutral testimony.

The Senate Committee amended the bill to include the contents of SB 139. The original version of SB 139, requested by Senator Fitzgerald, would have designated the portion of K-7 through Lansing as the Mayor Ken Bernard Memorial Highway. The Senate Committee amended the

name designation to be consistent with requirements of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, after consultation with a KDOT official.

Fiscal effects. According to fiscal notes prepared by the Division of the Budget, the bill would have these fiscal effects:

- The bill as introduced would have no fiscal effect on KDOT agency operations.
- KDOT indicates the enactment of the provisions to commemorate 2nd Lieutenant Sisson, as introduced, would require two signs to be planned, manufactured, installed, and maintained, for an expenditure of \$3,900.
- KDOT indicates two signs would need to be planned, manufactured, installed, and maintained for the George Ablah Expressway. The cost of the two signs, including installation, would be \$3,440. The additional 50 percent needed for future maintenance would be \$1,720. The agency would need to receive \$5,160 from donations before installing the signs. KDOT indicates there would be no fiscal effect from adjusting the boundaries for the Bonnie Huy Memorial Highway since those signs have not yet been placed.
- KDOT indicates two signs would need to be planned, manufactured, installed, and maintained for the Mayor Ken Bernard Memorial Highway. The costs of the two signs, including installation, would be \$3,920. The additional 50 percent needed for future maintenance would be \$1,960. KDOT would have to receive \$5,880 from donations before installing the signs. (No revised fiscal note to reflect the changes to the wording on the signs was available when the Senate Committee took action.) KDOT states the Amelia Earhart Memorial Highway already exists and the new designation breaks the

continuity of the route, so two additional signs are needed. The cost of these additional signs, including installation, would be \$3,540.

Fiscal notes for SB 5, SB 68, and SB 139, as introduced, state KDOT would need an increase in expenditure authority from the agency operations account of the State Highway Fund. Any fiscal effect associated with those provisions is not reflected in *The FY 2016 Governor's Budget Report*.