

24 February 2021

Presentation to KS State Committee on Transportation

Subject: Request From Blue Rapids American Legion Post 169 to name the highway connecting Blue Rapids KS and Waterville Kansas for two local service men, Sp4 Gene Meyers of Waterville and Cpl Allen Oatney of Blue Rapids, who gave their lives for our country while serving in Vietnam 51 years ago this June.

Mr. Chairman,

This is not the first time you have entertained our request so I will be brief and only emphasize the key points.

51 years have passed. Now most of our legion members are Vietnam Era Veterans. We can all agree that it was an egregious war, and the treatment of returning service members was as well. They did not receive the support or gratitude from our people at home as was the norm for previous wars.

The current generation does not have any idea what our service members endured in Vietnam or when arriving home. We must remember so as not to be caught in such a debacle again. Humans have short memories and need to be reminded. Naming this highway creates an opportunity for our communities to inform and remind the current generation of the true cost of their freedoms. It is no coincidence that this highway passes in from of our unified High School.

I am a post-Vietnam Era Veteran and want to help right the wrong I saw done to those back then. I want my grandchildren and the community's children to value the service of every veteran and be willing to serve if need be. I want Blue Rapids, Waterville, and the State of Kansas to be know for producing good service members, supporting the service members, and caring for its veterans.

We have done our part with this endeavor and now we are asking the State to stand with us and pass the necessary Bill.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and committee members, for your time and support of our Kansas Veterans and future generations.

Veteran, Cpt Janet Zayas, US Army Nurse Corps, American Legion, George Bedford post 169.

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