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BILL RHILEY
BOTH HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE

March 6, 2024

Transportation Committee Chairman Peterson and Committee
Room 546 N

HB 2507

Designating a bridge in Sumner County as the Senior Airman Derek Scott Martin Memorial Bridge.

Committee, Derek Martin, was born in Wellington, Kansas on July 16, 1987. He was a graduate of Wellington High School, class of 2005.

Derek excelled at academics, technology, and sports, to include baseball, basketball, and his passion - golf. He was on the golf team all through high school and enjoyed working at the golf course.

Derek was 14 years old, when the National events of 9/11/2001 occurred, and that was when he committed to joining the military. Derek enlisted in the United States Air Force in 2006.

He proudly served in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan multiple times.

He was a decorated war veteran and recipient of the prestigious Purple Heart.

The loss of his close comrades was devastating, and greatly affected him in every aspect. Derek's PTSD, anxiety, and survivor guilt only continued to worsen over time. As a civilian he was diagnosed with sleep apnea, again, that only worsened his overall mental health.

In 2012 Derek was honorably discharged, after serving six years in the Air Force.

Soon after, he enrolled in Professional Golfers Career College, Orlando, FL specializing in an associate degree in pro golf management, a dream he had long aspired to accomplish. Derek graduated amongst the top of his class in 2013, holds the course record with a 59, and had qualified for numerous tournaments. Derek worked hard as an assistant golf professional while living in

Florida, and at several golf courses in California. Additionally, Derek was in his final semester of school; he would have graduated in the spring of 2020 with his bachelor's degree in business administration.

Due to Derek's love for the military and helping others, he partnered with the Wounded Warrior Project and spent a great deal of time talking about his military experiences with local veterans, hoping that sharing his stories would help others. Derek always believed sports, especially golf, was a way to ease the pain people felt, especially those with PTSD and TBI ailments.

Derek truly was a big kid at heart and enjoyed being home with his wife and two kids. Derek's oldest son is a senior at Wellington High School and will graduate with the class of 2024.

Derek Scott Martin, 32, passed away on Tuesday, March 17, 2020, in Lincoln, California.

The bridge they chose has a special meaning. He drove over it often located in Wellington, and close to the golf course where he spent so much of his time over the years.

Representative Bill Rhiley
District 80