

Never Forgotten. A phrase I've heard more times than I can count. It means so much to our family to know other people remember Robert. Hearing someone speak about him, or just the mention of his name brings us comfort. He was 40 when he died and our children were so young that keeping his memory alive is a meaningful but also a challenging task.

Memories can be tricky especially with the passage of time. Certain things prompt us to remember. A smell, a song, a taste of food or a photograph. We all have ways we remind ourselves of tasks needing done, or appointments. At work, I prefer sticky notes. But, for personal things, I use a digital calendar or a grocery list tacked up on my fridge (held with a magnet from a place I've been). Memorials remind us of the people we have loved and lost and the sacrifices they made.

Along highway 30 between Scappoose and St. Helens, there is a memorial sign for Officer Thomas Jeffries. I never knew him, but after the sign was installed, I looked him up and learned about what a great man he was. He was killed on the job in 1997 leaving behind his pregnant wife. That highway sign was made possible by HR10 I believe in 2015.

My hope is that this bill will pass so that Fallen firefighters will be able to have memorial signs as well so that in future years people will see the signs and will read my husband's name, Robert Arnold Hales, or my friend's son's name Scott Charlson or any of the names of Oregon's Fallen Firefighters and be reminded that first responders and public officers are putting their safety and their lives on the line daily so that we can live comfortably and safely here in Oregon and across the nation.

Memorial signs are a great way to keep the promise to families of the fallen that their beloved firefighter is never forgotten.