

Enrolled
House Bill 3452

Sponsored by Representatives ZIKA, LEWIS, HELT, Senator KNOPP; Representatives BONHAM, RESCHKE, SPRENGER (at the request of LTC Dick Tobiason)

CHAPTER

AN ACT

Relating to memorial highways; amending ORS 366.924.

Whereas more than 1,000 members of the armed forces who remain missing in action have called Oregon their home, including an estimated 21 from World War I, 887 from World War II, two from the Cold War, 57 from the Korean War and 33 from the Vietnam War; and

Whereas those from this state who remain missing in action represent approximately 16 percent of the nearly 6,000 Oregonians who paid the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the military since the Civil War; and

Whereas 770 Oregonians were prisoners of war during World War II, and, of those Oregonians, approximately 78 percent were returned to the custody of the United States, 11 percent were executed by the enemy, 10 percent died in the custody of the enemy and the fate of one percent to this day remains unknown; and

Whereas the Legislative Assembly, with the assistance of the Bend Heroes Foundation and its partners, has established memorial highways across Oregon to honor veterans, including the World War I Veterans Memorial Highway, the World War II Veterans Historic Highway, the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway, the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq Veterans Memorial Highway, the Purple Heart Trail and the Oregon Medal of Honor Highway; and

Whereas memorial highways honor the many Oregonians who served in the military during five major wars since World War I, whose numbers approach 500,000; and

Whereas at the request of the Bend Heroes Foundation, the Legislative Assembly established the Oregon Medal of Honor Highway on the 451 miles of U.S. Highway 20 that cross this state, honoring current and future recipients of the Medal of Honor; and

Whereas the Bend Heroes Foundation and its partners raised over \$100,000 to pay for the creation, installation and maintenance of 79 markers alongside those veterans memorial highways; and

Whereas U.S. Highway 26 is the longest highway in Oregon, stretching 471 miles from the Oregon coast to the Idaho state line, and crosses all existing veterans memorial highways spearheaded by the Bend Heroes Foundation; and

Whereas the 74-mile segment of U.S. Highway 26 beginning at U.S. Highway 101 and ending at Interstate 5 was designated as the Sunset Highway in 1946 by the Oregon State Highway Commission to honor the 41st Infantry Division, which was deployed in World War II following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and whose soldiers wore uniforms displaying a sunset insignia; and

Whereas Oregon has not designated a highway to honor Oregonians who have been a prisoner of war (POW) or missing in action (MIA) since the Civil War; and

Whereas designating U.S. Highway 26 as the POW/MIA Memorial Highway would honor the more than 1,770 Oregonians who have been POWs or MIAs since the Civil War; and

Whereas designating U.S. Highway 26 as the POW/MIA Memorial Highway would help give closure to the families of Oregonians who were POWs or MIAs; and

Whereas Oregonians are deeply concerned about the fate of the POWs and MIAs; and

Whereas designating U.S. Highway 26 as the POW/MIA Memorial Highway will neither change the official name of U.S. Highway 26 nor require maps showing U.S. Highway 26 to change; and

Whereas Oregon's veterans have offered to finance the creation, installation and maintenance of special markers for the POW/MIA Memorial Highway; now, therefore,

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. ORS 366.924 is amended to read:

366.924. (1) The portion of U.S. Highway 395, crossing the State of Oregon, beginning at the California state line and ending at the Washington state line, shall also be known as the World War I Veterans Memorial Highway.

(2) The portion of Interstate 5, crossing the State of Oregon, beginning at the California state line and ending at the Washington state line, shall also be known as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, and as the Purple Heart Trail.

(3) The portion of Interstate 5, beginning in Albany and ending in Salem, shall also be known as the Atomic Veterans Memorial Highway.

(4) The portion of U.S. Highway 101, crossing the State of Oregon, beginning at the California state line and ending at the Washington state line, shall also be known as the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq Veterans Memorial Highway.

(5) The portion of U.S. Highway 26, beginning where the highway intersects with U.S. Highway 101 and ending at the Idaho state line, shall also be known as the POW/MIA Memorial Highway.

[5] (6) The Department of Transportation shall place and maintain suitable markers along each highway described in this section to indicate the designation of each highway.

[(6)(a)] (7)(a) The department may accept moneys from and may enter into agreements with veterans groups to create, install and maintain the markers.

(b) The department may not use public funds for the installation and maintenance of the markers.

Passed by House June 25, 2019

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Timothy G. Sekerak, Chief Clerk of House

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Tina Kotek, Speaker of House

Passed by Senate June 29, 2019

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Peter Courtney, President of Senate

Received by Governor:

.....M,....., 2019

Approved:

.....M,....., 2019

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Kate Brown, Governor

Filed in Office of Secretary of State:

.....M,....., 2019

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Bev Clarno, Secretary of State