



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Transportation

Director's Office

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DATE: January 19, 2023

TO: House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

FROM: Mac Lynde, Division Administration, Delivery and Operations
Oregon Department of Transportation

SUBJECT: House Bill 2146 – Gold Star Families Memorial Highway

INTRODUCTION

House Bill 2146 directs the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to install and maintain markers indicating U.S. Highway 30 as the Oregon Gold Star Families Memorial Highway.

DISCUSSION

The legislature has designated a number of Oregon's border-to-border highways over the last several sessions to honor a number of veterans groups. In addition, the legislature has instituted a program by which the ODOT can install signs to honor individual police officers, firefighters, and members of the military who are killed in the line of duty. These signs serve to remind the public of the sacrifices these officers, firefighters, and members of the military, and their families, have made. ODOT must balance installing memorial signs with needed regulatory, guide, and motorist information signs that inform, guide, and warn drivers.

House Bill 2146 will designate U.S. Highway 30 beginning where the highway intersects with U.S. Highway 101 and ending at the Idaho state line, as the Oregon Gold Star Families Memorial Highway. U.S. Highway 30 follows multiple state highways throughout Oregon and is not continuous across the state. For most of its mileage in Oregon the highway overlaps with Interstate 84, which has already been designated as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway. U.S. Highway 30 also is routed through the Columbia Gorge Natural Scenic Area, an area that due to its scenic designation ODOT would prefer not to install additional signage in.

ODOT will appropriately space signs on Interstate 84/U.S. Highway 30 to lessen potential confusion or safety issues if the legislature determines that U.S. 30 is the preferred location for this memorial highway.

SUMMARY

House Bill 2146 designates a portion of U.S. Highway 30 as the Oregon Gold Star Families Memorial Highway. As with Oregon's other memorial highways, ODOT may not use State Highway Funds for the installation and maintenance of the markers and will rely on moneys from veterans groups to pay for the creation, installation, and maintenance of the markers. ODOT appreciates the dedication from the sponsor to ensure that the sacrifices of Oregon's veterans and their families are not forgotten.