

Legislative Analysis



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MEMORIAL HIGHWAY**

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**Senate Bill 435 as reported from House committee
Sponsor: Sen. Kenneth Horn
1st House Committee: Transportation
2nd House Committee: Ways and Means
Senate Committee: Transportation and Infrastructure
Complete to 9-11-20**

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

(Enacted as Public Act 214 of 2020)

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 435 would amend the Michigan Memorial Highway Act to designate the portion of highway M-81 beginning at the intersection with North Gera Road in Saginaw County and extending east to the intersection with South Van Buren Road in Tuscola County as the “Staff Sergeant Eugene H. E. Alex Memorial Highway.”

Proposed MCL 250.2075a

BACKGROUND:

According to committee testimony and online sources, Staff Sergeant Eugene H. E. Alex was born on August 30, 1974. He grew up in Reese and later lived in Bay City. In May 1996, recently married and working at a granary, Alex decided to enlist and joined the Army. He served at Fort Knox in Kentucky and Fort Hood in Texas before going to Fort Wainwright, Alaska, in September 2003. He was also stationed in Bosnia and Korea.

Staff Sergeant Alex was assigned to the 4th Squadron, 14th Calvary regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team at Fort Wainwright. Before leaving for Iraq in the fall of 2005, he told his wife that if anything happened to him, he wanted her and the children to move to Reese.

About one year later, on August 30, 2006, a call came to the Alex home. Staff Sergeant Alex had been shot in the head by a sniper when his unit was attacked with small-arms fire in Baghdad. He was transported to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, in critical condition. He died September 2, 2006. He was 32 years old.

Dedicating this section of M-81, located one block from where Staff Sergeant Eugene H. E. Alex grew up, would be an appropriate way to honor his life, his dedication, and his service to the state and our nation.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Section 2 of the Michigan Memorial Highway Act indicates that the state transportation department shall provide for the erection of suitable markers indicating the name of the highway only “when sufficient private contributions are received to completely cover the cost of erecting and maintaining those markers.” As a result, the bill has no state or local fiscal impact.

POSITIONS:

The Department of Transportation indicated a neutral position on the bill. (9-9-20)

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.