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KEITH DEACON MEMORIAL HIGHWAY

House Bill 4247 (Substitute H-2) First Analysis (3-2-99)

Sponsor: Rep. Andrew Raczkowski
Committee: Transportation

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

D. Keith Deacon served with great distinction in the City of Farmington Hills, a civic leader deeply committed to improving the quality of life for his fellow citizens throughout the community. Mr. Deacon served on Farmington Hill's charter commission, its first city council, as its fourth mayor (1976-77), twice as its mayor *pro tempore* (1975-76 and 1979), and for more than 17 years on the community's Economic Development Corporation, acting as the EDC's chairperson from 1994 until his death in 1996.

During his years of community service, Mayor Emeritus Deacon took a particular interest in the economic development of the city and the building of the roads in Farmington Hills. He was concerned about the way traffic patterns affected the residents and the business community.

To recognize his career of public service which spanned four decades, the citizens of his community would like to honor Keith Deacon by naming a portion of state highway after him.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

House Bill 4247 would create a new act to specify that a portion of highway M-5 (located in the area lying between the interchange of highways I-96, I-696, and I-275 and 8 Mile Road in the City of Farmington Hills and the City of Farmington) be designated as the Keith Deacon Memorial Highway. The bill would direct the Department of Transportation to erect suitable markers when private contributions are received to pay their cost.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

D. Keith Deacon was born in Kingsville, Ontario January 19, 1927 and died unexpectedly in February

1996 while returning from a conference sponsored by the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, an organization in which he held many different offices.

Mr. Deacon settled in Detroit in 1956 to work for Manufacturers Bank. He retired from Manufacturers as a second vice-president in 1990. After retirement and in addition to his service on the Economic Development Corporation, Mr. Deacon served as an active city election worker, and also as a member of the city's Building Authority.

Upon his passing the city manager of the City of Farmington Hills issued a statement in which he said "Farmington Hills has lost one of its greatest citizens . . . a willing volunteer who offered a special kind of leadership that will be hard to replace. He was deeply respected by all who had the opportunity to work with him." The community's mayor described Mr. Deacon "as a positive person, one who always saw the bright side and the potential" of any state of affairs.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

The House Fiscal Agency notes that Department of Transportation sources estimate sign fabrication costs at \$14 per square foot and installation costs at \$1,200 to \$1,800 per sign for a 4 foot by 8 foot sign. The total costs would depend on the actual size and number of the signs.

ARGUMENTS:

For:

This tribute to Mayor Emeritus Keith Deacon is particularly fitting, because beginning in 1989 Mr. Deacon was committed to finding solutions to the traffic congestion at this interchange.

As leader of the EDC's Community Improvement Committee, he encouraged the EDC to fund a \$90,000

preliminary engineering study of the project. Then, when the federal money committed for the completion of the project fell through, Mr. Deacon spearheaded a request for demonstration grant monies. As a result of his persistent advocacy, over \$1.3 million had been advanced by the federal government for the project at the time of his death.

POSITIONS:

The City of Farmington Hills Mayor and City Council support the bill. (2-23-99)

The City of Farmington Hills Economic Development Corporation supports the bill. (8-10-98)

Analyst: J. Hunault

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