

REQUIREMENTS FOR NAMING HIGHWAYS

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House Bill 4784 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Jack O'Malley
Committee: Transportation
Complete to 10-21-19

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

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4784 would amend the Michigan Memorial Highway Act to change the process and conditions under which highways may be named in this state and to allow cities, counties, or villages to name memorial roads, streets, or highways if certain conditions are met.

Under the bill, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) would provide for erection and maintenance of suitable markers at the approach of a highway named under the act only if all of the following conditions were met:

- A private party has provided sufficient money to pay the cost of erecting the markers.
- A private party has paid at least \$3,000 into an escrow account established and maintained by MDOT for the cost of maintaining the markers.
- The highway is named after one of the following individuals who died in the line of duty:
 - A member of the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, or Air Force.
 - A firefighter.
 - A police officer.
 - An emergency medical services professional.
 - A state correctional officer.

Currently, the Michigan Memorial Highway Act requires the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to provide for the erection and maintenance of suitable highway naming markers only when sufficient private contributions have been received. The act does not currently contain requirements regarding individuals, groups, entities, historical events, or historical routes for whom or which a highway may be named.

House Bill 4794 would also allow a local unit of government (a city, county, or village) to name any road, street, or highway under its control as a memorial road, street, or highway and provide for the erection and maintenance of suitable markers on those roads, streets, or highways if a private party has provided sufficient money to pay the cost of erecting the markers and a private party has paid at least \$3,000 into an escrow account established and maintained by the local unit of government for the cost of maintaining the markers.

MCL 250.1002 and proposed MCL 250.1002a

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Michigan Memorial Highway Act currently provides a process for the naming of certain highways and requires certain duties of MDOT. The act currently appears to govern only highways under the jurisdiction of MDOT, i.e., state trunkline highways. Section 2 of the act currently indicates that MDOT 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, bills to create new named highways have had no direct fiscal impact on state government.

House Bill 4784 would retain the requirement that a private party provide sufficient money to pay the cost of erecting memorial highway markers. The bill would create a new requirement that the private party pay at least \$3,000 into an escrow account established by MDOT for the cost of maintaining the memorial highway marker. The bill would appear to have a marginal fiscal impact. In some ways, this new requirement simply clarifies provisions of current law to ensure that sufficient money is provided not only for the erection of memorial highway markers but also for maintenance of those markers.

The bill would also expand the scope of the act to include roads, streets, and highways under the jurisdiction of a local unit of government (defined as a city, county or village). The bill would allow a local unit of government to establish a memorial highway and would require that a private party provide sufficient money to pay for the cost of erecting a memorial marker and pay not less than \$3,000 into an escrow account established by the local unit of government to pay for the cost of marker maintenance.

The impact of the bill on local units of government cannot be readily determined at this time. It is not clear to what extent local units of government currently establish memorial roads, streets, or highways, or how local units of government currently provide for the cost of erecting and maintaining memorial markers.

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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.