

MEMORIAL AND COMMEMORATIVE SIGNING

It is important to develop a consistent and reasonable process for legislative requests to establish and place memorial or commemorative signs on state highways or bridges. Accordingly, the following outlines the terms for the placement of signs.

BACKGROUND:

Historically, the Legislature has received requests for special signing at a location on a highway or bridge in memory of an individual or in commemoration of an event, person or place. Currently, there is no consistent process for how or under what circumstances the legislature should honor the request. Current law (60-2-242 MCA) allows for the design and erection of certain signs on select routes but does not include signs that would be covered under this resolution.

Additionally, approximately 33 (not including the 2021 legislative session) separate legislative actions have directed the agency to sign infrastructure in memory of an individual or to commemorate an event.

The legislature decided to adopt a resolution to provide a consistent, practical approach to consider memorial and commemorative signing requests, in order to fairly consider each on its merits. The legislature will follow the terms of this resolution to receive and evaluate requests to install a memorial or commemorative sign on any part of the state highway system infrastructure.

Resolution:

The legislature hereby adopts the following resolution to be used when considering a request from a person, group or government official to install a sign on any portion of the state highway infrastructure in memory of, or in commemoration of a person or event.

- A. No memorial or commemorative signs will be installed on the Interstate Highway system [without concurrence of the Federal Highway Administration].
- B. Memorial signs are not a substitution for the “White Cross Memorial Program” managed by the Montana American Legion.
- E. All signs installed under this policy must conform to the MUTCD and must be placed in an area approved by the department, outside the safety “clear zone” of the right of way.
- F. Commemorative sign
 - 1. A request to install a sign on a portion of the state highway infrastructure to commemorate an event or person of Historic Significance to: the area, the state or the nation will be considered as a “Commemorative Sign”.
 - a. The person, persons or group seeking a commemorative sign designation must submit a letter or report to the legislature documenting the reason that the area is of historic significance to justify the placement of a sign to commemorate the location(s). The legislature shall evaluate the request and may seek commentary or support from other officials with respect to the supporting reasons and/or recommendation whether to approve the request.
 - b. Upon approval, the department (Transportation) will design, fabricate and place the sign in accordance with the MUTCD, in a location outside the

highway safety clear zone. Depending on the size of the sign it may be located in a pullout, rest area or parking area sufficient to safely allow for parked vehicles.

G. Law Enforcement Memorial Sign

- a. The person, persons or group seeking a memorial sign in memory of and in honor of any law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty while on the highways under the jurisdiction of the state must submit a request to the legislature documenting the area to be identified by a sign to commemorate the location(s).
- b. Upon approval, the department (Transportation) will design, fabricate and place the sign in accordance with the MUTCD, in a location outside the highway safety clear zone.

Memorial signs shall be formatted in one of the following way:

John Doe
Memorial Highway