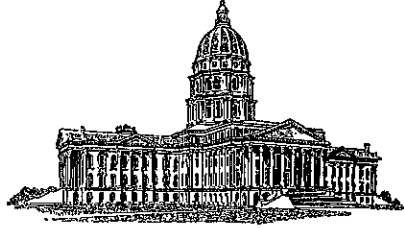


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COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
VICE-CHAIR: TRANSPORTATION
EDUCATION
MEMBER: ETHICS & ELECTIONS
WAYS & MEANS

JOHN DOLL
39TH DISTRICT

In the summer of 1970 two young men from the town of Wright, Kansas lost their lives fighting for the United States in the conflict in Vietnam. These two friends, Richard Conrardy and Gregg Steimel had much in common, they were both exceptional members of their community, and both exhibited unwavering courage and bravery while serving their country.

Richard Conrardy was a nineteen-year-old former class president from Wright, Kansas. He served as a Private 1st class in the 101st airborne of the 506th infantry stationed in Thua Thien, South Vietnam just miles from the DMZ. Private Conrardy also distinguished himself as a medical aidman in conjunction with his regular duties. On the night of July 2nd, just two months into his service, his base was attacked. Private Conrardy was on guard duty at the time of the attack and showed no hesitation in helping his fellow soldiers. Private Conrardy rushed into the barrage of bullets to come to the medical aid of a fellow fallen soldier, but the onslaught of enemies was too overwhelming, Richard Conrardy died in battle. Richard's passing was abysmal news for all of Ford County, although nobody was surprised to learn that Richard Conrardy died doing what he was known best for, helping others. His valor was not overlooked and he was posthumously awarded a silver star for his bravery and devotion to helping his fellow soldiers.

Gregg Steimel was also just 19 years old when sent to battle in the Tay Ninh region of Vietnam. Gregg showed his devotion to the US military and quickly rose in ranks to become a Sergeant in the 4th infantry division. While moving through thick forests in the Tay Minh region, American forces encountered a well-hidden and well protected enemy stronghold. Caught by surprise, the American forces faced many casualties, and began to retreat. Sergeant Steimel refused to allow his fellow soldiers to be abandoned, he ran into open field facing heavy fire, despite being struck multiple times he made it to cover on the other side. His efforts were successful, while distracting enemy fire, medics could evacuate the wounded troops, saving many lives. At this point the heavily wounded sergeant could have retreated into the woods, but as he looked out into the clearing he saw weapons left by fallen allies. To the astonishment of his fellow troops, a seriously injured Gregg Steimel, ran back into heavy fire to try and recover those weapons left behind, to ensure they wouldn't fall into the wrong hands. This valiant act of bravery would be his last, for on that final day of July, Gregg Steimel lost his life in South Vietnam. Gregg Steimel showed great bravery and bestowed great honor on his unit, his family, and his community. For his extraordinary bravery and selfless actions in battle, Gregg Steimel was posthumously awarded the distinguished service star, a bronze star and a National Defense Service medal in 1999.

In the Month of July 1970, the small town of Wright, Kansas lost two young men in the war in Vietnam. These men Richard Conrardy and Gregg Steimel both showed extraordinary courage and honor in their selfless acts of valor during such a turbulent environment. To properly honor these fallen heroes, we humbly ask for your vote in senate bill 256 to distinguish the United States highway 50 from the east city limits of Dodge City to 118 road in Ford county, as the SGT Gregg Steimel and PFC Richard Conrardy memorial highway.