



Testimony for Amendment: House Bill 26
State Representative Tracy Richardson, District 86
House Transportation and Public Safety
March 9th, 2021

Good morning Chairman Baldrige, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee. I stand before you today on behalf of the family of not one but two fallen law enforcement heroes. In sad and unusual circumstances, a father and son were both killed in the line of duty. In 1973 Deputy Sheriff William “Bill” Bender was killed along Route 309 in Marion while en route to setting up a road block as a result of an escape from a nearby jail. Just 9 years later, his son Trooper William “Randy” Bender was died after being struck by a tractor trailer while directing traffic at a construction site.

Mr. Craig Massie, nephew of Bill and cousin of Randy contacted me to share the story of the accidents and to ask that the sacrifice of his family be remembered with a road naming. Former Sherriff Bailey of Marion County, who once served with Bill Bender, fully supports honoring his colleague with this bill. Eileen Newell, sister of Deputy Sheriff Bill is now 91 years old. June, the wife of the Deputy Sheriff is 92. Mrs. Newell along with other close friends and family would like to see the road naming complete.

The sacrifice of these officers as they served their communities and the unique pain their family has endured should be recognized. I ask for your support to designate a portion of State Route 309 in Marion County as the Deputy Sheriff Bill Bender and Trooper Randy Bender Memorial Highway. This will ensure they are not forgotten and will honor them with a permanent tribute in their community.