

## Melissa Bunyard Testimony - HB 2507

Dear Committee,

My name is Melissa Bunyard, I am an aunt of Derek Scott Martin. It is my pleasure to write this letter. He was a great cousin and role model to my son. Derek was a year older, and Cody loved spending time with him, he even wanted to dress like Derek. Swimming and action figures were a couple of their favorite activities.

Derek was involved in many sports during his youth growing up in Wellington. He seemed to excel in everything he did.

The events of 9-11 motivated him to join the Air Force. As a family we were very proud of his bravery and dedication to our country.

While deployed Derek showed his generosity by giving items to children, the soccer balls were a favorite. I was a teacher in Douglass, KS. One year my class wrote letters to Derek while he was deployed. We were lucky to get a visit from him while he was home on leave. That was many years ago but I can still remember the excitement on the students' faces as he walked in wearing his military uniform. He brought pictures and stories with him. I can honestly say that was a highlight of those 8- and 9-year-old children's third grade year.

After his military career ended Derek gave back to his community with his Golf Foundation and even with his own children's school and sporting events.

Derek gave his all to our country. In my opinion dedicating this bridge in his name would be a great honor not only for him but to the town of Wellington and the state of Kansas.

Thank you for considering this memorial.

Sincerely,

Melissa Bunyard