

STATE OF KANSAS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PATRICK A. PENN, CPT (RET.)  
85TH DISTRICT

**Proponent Testimony for Approval of the Representative Marvin S. Robinson II Memorial Highway**

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Committee Members,

Today, as the Kansas State Legislature mourns the loss of our esteemed colleague, Representative Marvin S. Robinson II, who leaves behind a legacy of unwavering service and dedication to the People of Kansas, I urge your support and approval of **HB2029**.

Representative Robinson's journey was one defined by service, learning, and a **rock-solid** commitment to his community. Born in Kansas City, Kansas, on April 15th, 1957, he remained a lifelong advocate for the place he called home, "The Dot." He graduated from Emporia State University, where he also crossed the burning sands to forge lasting bonds as a "Son of Blood & Thunder" in his beloved Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

In 1978, Marvin enlisted to serve the nation with distinction at the U.S. Navy Training Command Operations as a Specialist, further honing his leadership skills and strengthening his resolve. Upon receiving an Honorable Discharge, he then attended Temple University in Pennsylvania, focusing on Journalism.

Representative Robinson's legacy is deeply intertwined with the preservation of the Quindaro Ruins / Townsite. In May of 1987, he embarked on an absolutely remarkable 37-year journey dedicated to safeguarding this vital piece of Kansan and American history. His relentless determination ensured its rightful placement on the National Registry of Historic Places in 2002. His deep and profound commitment to preserving his Community's rich heritage while simultaneously carving its path to future economic development earned Representative Robinson the affectionate title of "Mayor of Quindaro," a testament to the deep respect and admiration he garnered from every soul who truly knew him. For this reason, it is wholly appropriate that the Legislature pass **HB2029**, which will rename a portion of the KS-5 Highway in front of the Quindaro Ruins after Rep. Robinson.

A lifelong public servant, Representative Robinson dedicated himself to the betterment of his KCK Community both through elected office and tireless advocacy. Marvin served on the Board of Economic Opportunity Foundation, resolved to improve the lives of others. In 2022, Robinson overwhelmingly won both his Primary and General elections. This unassuming statesman quietly arrived in Topeka to bring, until his untimely passing, a large voice and huge impact to Kansas and his 35th House District— with deep intelligence, humble grace, true grit, and courage that seemed boundless.

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His commitment to legislative action is evident in the significant body of legislation he sponsored, including

5 House Bills:

- **HB 2341 - Declaring Juneteenth National Independence Day to be a legal public holiday** and closing state offices for certain legal public holidays.
- **HB 2348 - Restoring local government control over wages, compensation and benefits for construction projects.**
- HB 2162 - Providing for sales tax exemption for hygiene products.
- HB 2349 - Abolishing the death penalty and creating the crime of aggravated murder.
- HB 2363 - Releasing any person convicted of a drug offense involving marijuana from such person's sentence and providing for the expungement of any associated records.

8 House Concurrent Resolutions:

- **HR 6014 - Commending the United States African-American Burial Grounds Preservation Program.**
- **HR 6047 - Commemorating the 70th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education.**
- HCR 5009 - Proposing to amend the constitution of the state of Kansas to decrease the assessed value for real property used for residential purposes to 9%.
- HCR 5020 - Proposing a constitutional amendment to amend section 4 of the Kansas bill of rights to recognize the right to bear arms as a fundamental right that includes the possession and use of ammunition, firearm accessories and firearm components, and that any restrictions on such right are subject to the strict scrutiny standard.
- HR 6006 - Congratulating and commending the 2023 Kansas Teacher of the Year team.
- HR 6031 - Supporting the strengthening of Kansas' trade partnership with Ireland.
- HR 6035 - Affirming state sovereignty and supporting Texas in its efforts to combat illegal immigration.
- HR 6044 - Commemorating the celebration of St. Patrick's Day.

All these bills and resolutions reflect this Gladiator's unyielding dedication to address the diverse needs of his District and the State. Marvin approached the work with an inquisitiveness, an independence, and a spirit of hopefulness that garnered the legislator both respect and results...when some short-sightedly said he deserves neither.

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Marvin Robinson was a patriotic Navy man, committed to Country and Community. A true gentleman in every sense of the word. A gentleman of kind manners and deportment, he was a gentle man who humbly faced extreme friction and vicious opposition with a quiet grace that concealed the strength of his will.

A unifying force, a Servant Leader, and a force multiplier, Marvin was also the embodiment of the poem "IF" by Rudyard Kipling.

This day, dear friends, we remember how Rep. Robinson left this world so much better than he found it. He was surrounded by the appreciation of his Community, the respect of his peers, partners, and colleagues, and the love of his wonderful family.

Colleagues, thank you for your time and consideration today:

**Representative Marvin S. Robinson, II.**

He was a faithful Man of God.

He was a dear family man who was a Son, a Brother, and a Cousin.

He was the most humble of public servants.

He was my friend.

He was a Son of Kansas.

**Let us pass HB2029 and honor him.**

***//Original Signed//***

***Rep. Patrick Penn***

***Chairman | Legislative Modernization***

***State Representative | 85th District***

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