

STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE CAPITOL
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612
(785) 296-7690
lewis.bloom@house.ks.gov



1901 FRONTIER
CLAY CENTER, KANSAS 67432

LEWIS (BILL) BLOOM
54TH DISTRICT

HONORED GUESTS, VETERANS, COMMUNITY MEMBERS, AND DISTINGUISHED OFFICIALS,
AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

It is a profound honor to stand before you today as we officially recognize and dedicate a lasting tribute to the brave men and women who have sacrificed so much for our country. Today, we gather to designate a portion of U.S. Highway 77 and a bridge on K-82 as the POW/MIA Memorial Highway and Bridge—a solemn and enduring reminder of those who served, those who were taken prisoner, and those who never returned home.

This dedication is more than just a renaming of roads and bridges—it is a commitment by our community, our state, and our nation to never forget the sacrifices of our Prisoners of War and those Missing in Action. These are not just names etched in history books; they are fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, and friends who answered the call of duty and paid the ultimate price for our freedom.

The portion of U.S. Highway 77 that we recognize today runs from its junction with Interstate 70, north through Geary County to its junction with U.S. Highway 24 in Riley County, and then further north to its junction with K-16 Highway, a distance of around 41 miles. Along this route, thousands of travelers will see the signs designating it as the POW/MIA Memorial Highway. Each time they do, they will be reminded of the courage, resilience, and sacrifice of these heroes.

Additionally, we honor Bridge No. 82-14-6.88 (026) on K-82 Highway in Clay County, now officially designated as the POW/MIA Memorial Bridge. This bridge serves as both a physical and symbolic connection—linking generations together through a shared duty to remember those who were lost but never forgotten.

I want to take a moment to acknowledge the dedication of those who worked tirelessly to make this designation possible. From local veterans' organizations and community advocates to our state leaders and the Kansas Department of Transportation, your efforts ensure that the legacy of our POWs and MIAs lives on.

To the families of those who have been affected, we recognize your pain, your strength, and your resilience. This highway and bridge stand in honor of your loved ones, ensuring that their sacrifice is never forgotten and their memory is forever embedded in the fabric of our state and nation.

As we unveil these designations today, let us commit ourselves to honoring our Prisoners of War and those Missing in Action not just with words, but with action—by supporting veterans, advocating for those still unaccounted for, and ensuring that we always uphold the values they fought to protect.

May this highway serve as a reminder of their journey, their sacrifice, and our promise to never forget. May this bridge stand as a symbol of hope, connection, and remembrance.

THANK YOU, AND MAY WE ALWAYS HONOR THOSE WHO SERVED AND SACRIFICED FOR OUR GREAT NATION.

Respectfully,

Rep. Lewis Bloom
House District 64