

NAMING OF STATE HIGHWAYS

(Rep. Merrill Nelson—9/21/22)

Background:

By statute, the Legislature designates state highways. The Legislature delegates to UDOT jurisdiction and control over all state highways. For identification, UDOT assigns a number to each state highway. Occasionally, UDOT is requested to apply a name to a state highway. However, our **statutes contain no standards or procedures** for naming state highways. UDOT employees are unsure how to manage these requests, and the absence of standards and procedures leads to inconsistent treatment and results statewide. In addition, the Legislature has occasionally bypassed UDOT and named certain state highways by statute (72-4-2).

Proposal:

Draft a committee bill to provide standards and procedures for naming state highways.

Standards:

- + Leave authority with UDOT to address requests to name state highways.
- + Limit requests to previously unnamed state highways.
- + Limit state highways to one name within a county.
- + Require coordination with local government when state highway is entirely within a municipal or county boundary.
- + Limit special designations to names with historical or cultural significance or to deceased persons who rendered long and extraordinary public service to the state.
- + Prohibit names that denigrate any person, group, or entity; that cause public divisiveness; or that compromise public safety.
- + Exclude naming of interstate highways.

Procedure:

Written requests for a special designation are directed to UDOT for consideration under statutory standards. Requests concerning a highway entirely within city or county boundaries should be accompanied by a unanimous resolution from its governing body following a noticed public hearing on the proposed name. Requestor must agree to pay all costs of signage. Legislature should defer to UDOT and provide special designations by statute, consistent with statutory standards, only when UDOT has refused a request without good cause.