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Assembly Bill 456

Public Testimony

Assembly Committee on Transportation

Tuesday, December 5th

Thank you Chairwoman VanderMeer and members of the Assembly Committee on Transportation for allowing me to submit testimony in favor of Assembly Bill 465.

I am introducing Assembly Bill 465 along with Senator Stafsholt to remember Deputy Kaitie Leising of the St. Croix County Sheriff's Office. Deputy Kaitie Leising was dispatched to a vehicle in the ditch, where it was believed the driver was impaired. Shortly after Deputy Leising arrived and began to speak with the driver, he pulled a weapon and shot her. Deputy Leising sustained a gunshot wound and was taken to a local hospital, where she was pronounced dead.

I did have the benefit of knowing Kaitie when she worked the customer service desk at Fleet Farm in Menomonie. Kaitie was always friendly and helpful when serving others. Those who worked with her will say she always tried to be positive and find the good in people. Kaitie was always willing and eager to help others around her. She was known for her confidence, quick wit, and infectious smile.

This bill designates a portion of State Highway 128 in St. Croix County as "Kaitie Leising Memorial Highway". This portion of the highway includes the stretch of road where Deputy Leising lost her life in the line of duty.

I am proud to sponsor this legislation to honor the life and service of Kaitie Leising. Thank you again for your time and support of Assembly Bill 465.



ROB STAFSHOLT

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DATE: December 5, 2023

RE: Testimony on Assembly Bill 456

TO: Members of the Assembly Committee on Transportation

FROM: Senator Rob Stafsholt

Thank you Chairwoman VanderMeer and members of the Assembly Committee on Transportation and for hearing testimony on AB 456.

On May 6th, 2023, Deputy Kaitie Leising of the St. Croix County Sheriff's Office was dispatched to a vehicle in the ditch of State Highway 128 near Glenwood City, WI. It was believed the driver of the vehicle was impaired. Eight minutes after Deputy Leising arrived and began to speak with the driver, he pulled a weapon and shot her. Deputy Leising returned fire after sustaining a gunshot wound and was rushed to a local hospital, where she was unfortunately pronounced deceased.

This bill will preserve the memory of Deputy Kaitie Leising by designating a portion of State Highway 128 in St. Croix County with her name. This portion of the highway includes the stretch of road where Deputy Leising's life was taken from her. As you will hear later, Kaitie was known for her confidence, loyalty, and love of others, especially her family.

While I was drafting the bill, I became aware that this portion of state highway had previously been designated as the 128th Infantry Memorial Highway, and signed into law by Governor Walker in 2013. However, I made efforts to discuss the situation with Wisconsin National Guard Adjutant General Paul Knapp. After some discussion, the Adjutant General stated would be honored to have the 128th add Kaitie's designation to the highway. The highway will officially have both designations after this bill is signed into law.

I appreciate Chairwoman VanderMeer and committee members for hearing our testimony today. I ask for your support for this bill, and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.