

HB 3207 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Action Date: 04/06/17
Action: Do pass. Refer to Ways and Means.
Vote: 6-0-2-0
Yeas: 6 - Esquivel, Evans, Lewis, Lively, Parrish, Post
Exc: 2 - Boone, Meek
Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued
Revenue: No revenue impact
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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Names Interstate 5 between Albany and Salem, the Atomic Veterans Memorial Highway.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Veterans that suffered from exposure to radiation due to atomic testing
- Public education about atomic testing through highway memorial markers
- Alternative, less-congested stretches of highway

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The United States government engaged in atmospheric and underwater nuclear weapons testing from July 16, 1945, to November 4, 1962, exposing an estimated 200,000 or more United States military service members to unsafe levels of radiation. These veterans became known as atomic veterans. These veterans were unable to discuss their exposure until nuclear weapons testing was declassified many years later. Many veterans died before they were able to seek treatment. The United States Department of Veterans' Affairs has identified more than 20 cancers and diseases associated with exposure. Many atomic veterans were exposed without their knowledge, their consent or any subsequent disclosure.

House Bill 3207 designates Interstate 5 between Albany and Salem, the Atomic Veterans Memorial Highway.