

CHAPTER 675

AN ACT

HB 3207

Relating to the Atomic Veterans Memorial Highway; amending ORS 366.924.

Whereas 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; and

Whereas service members exposed to ionizing radiation due to participation in nuclear weapons testing became known as atomic veterans; and

Whereas atomic veterans were unable to discuss the nuclear weapons tests until the tests were declassified many years later; and

Whereas many atomic veterans died before they were able to seek veterans' benefits for their exposure to ionizing radiation; and

Whereas the United States Department of Veterans Affairs has identified more than 20 cancers and diseases associated with radiation exposure experienced by atomic veterans; and

Whereas many atomic veterans were exposed without their knowledge, their consent or any subsequent disclosure; and

Whereas atomic veterans served their country honorably and with distinction, dedication and self-sacrifice for the freedom of others; now, therefore,
Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. ORS 366.924 is amended to read:

366.924. (1) The portion of U.S. Highway 395, crossing the State of Oregon, beginning at the California state line and ending at the Washington state line, shall also be known as the World War I Veterans Memorial Highway.

(2) The portion of Interstate 5, crossing the State of Oregon, beginning at the California state line and ending at the Washington state line, shall also be known as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, and as the Purple Heart Trail.

(3) The portion of Interstate 5, beginning in Albany and ending in Salem, shall also be known as the Atomic Veterans Memorial Highway.

~~[(3)]~~ (4) The portion of U.S. Highway 101, crossing the State of Oregon, beginning at the California state line and ending at the Washington state line, shall also be known as the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq Veterans Memorial Highway.

~~[(4)]~~ (5) The Department of Transportation shall place and maintain suitable markers along each highway described in this section to indicate the designation of each highway.

~~[(5)(a)]~~ (6)(a) The department may accept moneys from and may enter into agreements with veterans groups to create, install and maintain the markers.

(b) The department may not use public funds for the installation and maintenance of the markers.

Approved by the Governor August 8, 2017

Filed in the office of Secretary of State August 8, 2017

Effective date January 1, 2018