

# Legislative Analysis



## PRIVATE WESLEY VIETTI KARNA MEMORIAL HIGHWAY

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**House Bill 5462 (H-1) as reported from committee**

**Sponsor: Rep. Gregory Markkanen**

**Committee: Transportation, Mobility and Infrastructure**

**Complete to 5-14-24**

Analysis available at  
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

*(Enacted as Public Act 95 of 2024)*

### SUMMARY:

House Bill 5462 would amend the Michigan Memorial Highway Act to designate highway M-26 in Adams Township, from Academy Street to Hubbard Avenue, as the “Private Wesley Vietti Karna Memorial Highway.”

Proposed MCL 250.1112

### BACKGROUND:

According to committee testimony, the *Escanaba Daily Press*, and the *Daily Mining Gazette*, Wesley Vietti Karna was born to Erikk Mattipoika Karna and Ida Olivia Karna in Houghton County on August 24, 1922. Private Karna was a member of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 362nd Infantry Regiment, 91st Division, II Corps, Fifth U.S. Army.

After initial training at Camp White, Oregon, the division participated in the Oregon Maneuver combat exercise. In North Africa, the division underwent more training at Arzew and Renan, French Morocco. In June, the division was sent to Italy as part of the Second Corps of the U.S. Fifth Army. On or near September 24, 1944, while fighting in northern Italy against an enemy force made up of German and Italian forces, Private Karna was killed in action. He was 22 years old.

In 1948, Private Karna’s remains were returned to the Upper Peninsula from Italy aboard the U.S. Army Transport Victory, along with 17 other Upper Peninsula service members who lost their lives during World War II.

Dedicating a portion of M-26 in Adams Township would be an appropriate way to honor his service and ultimate sacrifice for the state and the nation.

### FISCAL IMPACT:

Section 2 of the Michigan Memorial Highway Act indicates that the state transportation department shall provide for the erection of suitable markers indicating the name of the highway only “when sufficient private contributions are received to completely cover the cost of erecting and maintaining those markers.” As a result, the bill has no state or local fiscal impact.

**POSITIONS:**

The Department of Transportation indicated a neutral position on the bill. (5-14-24)

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