Since 1953, the Ohio General Assembly has designated portions of the state highway system as a memorial highway by passing legislation which is then signed into law by the Governor. Through Ohio Revised Code Chapters 5533 and 5534, the General Assembly has established more than 200 memorial highways. ODOT maintains a comprehensive list by county here.

The majority of highway designations are memorial designations for military personnel killed in action and public servants; however, highways may be designated in honor of events, groups, and other persons significant to the state or a region of the state (the Ohio House and Senate may offer further criteria). A highway designation will not change the official highway route number or name. Some highways have multiple highway designations at various points along the route. When a highway is designated as a memorial, the Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices directs that the memorial markers should first be installed in a rest area, scenic overlook, recreational area, or other appropriate location where parking is available. If no off-highway locations are available, then one sign in each direction can be installed on the main line.

**Step 1: Confirm Jurisdiction**

The state is generally responsible for constructing and maintaining the state highway system. The counties are responsible for county highways and townships are responsible for township roads. Municipal corporations are generally responsible for streets and highways within their jurisdiction. As a result of municipal control over roads within the municipal jurisdiction (“home rule”), when the General Assembly designates a highway within these limits, the responsibility for erecting the marker rests with the municipal corporation (see step 3 ‘installation’).

**Step 2: Legislative Process**

A State Representative and/or State Senator will need to introduce legislation in order to begin the legislative process. They will work with fellow members through the committee process.

**Step 3: Installation**

Once the memorial designation is effective (typically 90 days after signed into law), ODOT and/or the local jurisdiction will work with the primary legislative office to proof the sign and plan installation. The average cost of two memorial highway signs fabricated and installed is $500 and is provided by the state. ODOT will fabricate all signs. Should the naming fall within a municipality or on a township or county road, signs will be provided to the jurisdiction to erect. If desired, ODOT can wait to install a memorial designation sign until a determined date at the request of the legislator.

**Step 4: Commemorative Signs**

‘Commemorative Signs’ are a 16”x6” replica (varies based on text) of the highway sign and can be ordered by ODOT for family members, etc. ODOT can offer 0-10 commemorative plates free of charge. Additional commemorative plates are $7.00 each and a larger sign is ~$10.50/sq. ft.; options can be discussed with the ODOT district office placing the order. Sign orders average 30 days to fulfill.

Checks can be made payable to “Treasurer, State of Ohio” and sent to:

Ohio Department of Transportation  
Accounts Receivable, MS #2130  
1980 W. Broad St.  
Columbus, OH 43223

Please contact ODOT’s Office of Legislative Affairs at (614) 752-0401 or William.Hinman@dot.ohio.gov with any questions.