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Sen. Bud Burke Memorial Highway signs installed in Johnson County

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) installed roadside signs this week marking the Sen. Bud Burke Memorial Highway. The roadway segment is a part of K-7, from K-10 to West Santa Fe Drive, in Johnson County.

Legislation to officially designate the memorial highway was introduced in the Kansas Senate Committee on Transportation during the 2021 legislative session, approved by the Kansas Legislature and signed by Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly in April.

A longtime Johnson County resident and bipartisan leader, Sen. Bud Burke represented the area surrounding the newly named highway in both the Kansas House, from 1973 to 1975, and the Kansas Senate, from 1975 to 1997. While in the Kansas Senate, Burke was elected by colleagues to serve as Senate Majority Leader and then Senate President.

Burke spent three years as a United States Air Force fighter pilot before joining the United States Naval Air Reserve at the Olathe Naval Air Station in 1963. He continued to serve as a fighter pilot and was later the Commanding Officer of multiple battle staff Naval Reserve units. With 28 years of combined active and reserve military service, Burke retired in 1988 at the rank of Captain.

An active member of the National Conference of State Legislatures, Sen. Burke held multiple national leadership positions within the organization and was appointed by President George Bush Sr. and President Bill Clinton to the United States Trade Commission Intergovernmental Policy Advisory Committee.

Sen. Burke passed away in 2017. This month would have been his 87th birthday.



KDOT crew aligns signposts to set in steel sleeves preset underground. *Photo by Delaney Tholen, KDOT.*

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