

SB 2297

Senator Joan Heckaman

Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am Senator Joan Heckaman from D-23 which encompasses all of Eddy, Nelson, Griggs, and Steele Counties and the eastern half of Benson County including all the Spirit Lake Nation.

I am here in support of SB 2297 which would name a portion of Hwy 57 from the intersection with Hwy 281 to the intersection of Hwy 20 as Akicita (Veterans) Memorial Highway. This highway runs through the Spirit Lake Nation and the passage of this bill will recognize the large number of veterans from Spirit Lake who served our state and nation.

I taught at Four Winds School which is on the Spirit Lake Nation. I was there for 10 years in a couple of different capacities. I still remember taking students to see the school nurse, Janice McKay. Outside her office was the wall of honor. She had photos of many Spirit Lake veterans on that wall. The students always wanted to stop and tell me which ones were related to them. The Dakota are proud people and this bill will provide a daily reminder of those who served, those who passed, and those still with us who sacrifice so much.

Let's take this opportunity to honor these veterans.

I believe Senator Marcellais, a veteran and a veteran service officer, will provide more information for you.

Thank you for your time.