

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 630
By: Hilderbran
Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The 173d Airborne Brigade was activated in Okinawa in March 1963. General William Westmoreland chose the paratroopers of the elite, all volunteer, 173d Airborne Brigade to serve as the first Army combat unit in Vietnam. The 173d became General Westmoreland's Fire Brigade, a highly mobile unit, arguably the most feared by the North Vietnamese Army by the end of 1967. The Brigade distinguished itself in many ways earning fourteen campaign streamers and four presidential Unit Citations and produced a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the recently retired General Hugh Shelton. Thirteen Medals of Honor and six thousand Purple Hearts were awarded before the unit stood down in 1972 after six years of service in Vietnam. Seventeen hundred Brigade names are on the Vietnam Memorial Wall. The Brigade reputation led to its reactivation in Southern Europe two years ago as the Fire brigade of the region.

The Texas Chapter of the 173d Airborne Brigade's international society of the 173d Airborne Brigade, today promotes healing of soldiers and families, funds scholarships and lends personal and monetary assistance to deserving charities.

The purpose of HB 630 is to honor the Texans who were members of the 173d Brigade and to those who sacrificed their lives during the Vietnam conflict.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

HB 630 adds section 225.0274 to Subchapter B, Chapter 225 of the Transportation Code. This bill changes the name of Highway 173, between its intersection with State Highway 16 near Kerrville and its intersection with State Highway 16 in Jourdanton, to 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Highway. The department shall also design and construct memorial markers indicating the highway number.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Upon passage, or, if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2003.

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