

Sen. Marklein: Bills pass state Senate

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MADISON, WI – Two bills authored by Sen. Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green) passed the State Senate today. Senate Bill (SB) 345 designates State Highway 21 through Necedah, WI as a Purple Heart Memorial Highway. SB 437 closes a loophole for unregistered vehicles during a state of emergency.

“Both of the bills that passed the State Senate today were ideas brought to me by constituents who recognized an opportunity and a challenge. They asked for my help to bring legislation forward. I appreciate the support of my colleagues in the State Senate who voted ‘yes’ to move these proposals to the State Assembly,” Sen. Marklein said.

SB 345 designates State Highway 21 between Sparta and Oshkosh as a “Purple Heart Memorial Highway” as a permanent memorial to and in honor of all persons wounded, injured, or killed as a direct result of enemy action and have been awarded a Purple Heart. STH 21 travels through Necedah in the 17th Senate District. The idea for this bill was brought to Sen. Marklein by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) in Necedah. It is also supported by the Purple Heart Riders of Wisconsin and Purple Heart recipients throughout Wisconsin.

“This bill is a small way to say ‘thank you’ for the sacrifice and bravery of the men and women who have served our country,” Sen. Marklein said. “Wisconsin citizens have shown again and again that they are ready and willing to fight for our freedom and defend our country and we should always be ready and willing to honor our veterans in any way we can.”

SB 437 clarifies current law regarding the use and operation of unregistered vehicles during a state of emergency. This idea was brought to Sen. Marklein by

Green County District Attorney Craig Nolen and is supported by law enforcement throughout Wisconsin.

Under current law, a driver cannot operate an unregistered motor vehicle. However, there is an exception, “during a state of emergency proclaimed under ch. 323”. This is important during an actual and imminent emergency as it allows someone to drive to escape imminent harm. However, the volume of State of Emergency declarations over the past few years are inhibiting law enforcement.

This bill clarifies that all vehicles operated on a road must be registered, unless the operator of the vehicle believes he/she is in imminent danger of “death or great bodily harm”. Under the bill, a driver could still operate an unregistered vehicle if they were, for example, attempting to escape from an actual emergency.

SB 345 and SB 437 passed on voice votes in the State Senate. They are now headed to the State Assembly for consideration.