



ADAM JARCHOW

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 28TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony – AB 601: The Carson Holmquist Memorial Highway
Assembly Committee on Transportation
Public Hearing – Tuesday, February 02, 2016
State Capitol – 417 North



The following was written by Carson's parents, Tom & Sue Holmquist and will be read by Rep. Jarchow on their behalf.

Due to the emotional content of this testimony I am eternally grateful to have our Representative read our thoughts, who has been a god send for our family through this tragedy. We apologize for not being able to be here but I have medical appointment in cities that have been in place for several months that have to be taken care of. When I was asked to write this testimony I was asked to let people know a little about Carson, who he was and why I feel it is appropriate to have a road named after him and why this memorial is important to our family.

Carson Holmquist was our son who died at the early age of 25. While born in St Croix Falls. Carson was a native of Grantsburg and graduated from Grantsburg High School in 2008. He was a two-year starter in the defensive backfield for the Grantsburg Pirates and played all 4 years of high school. He loved farming and worked on a Grantsburg farm throughout high school and whenever he came home on leave was always happy to visit and help out. He lived on Highway 87 during this time also. He was an avid fisherman and hunter and enjoyed cars and trucks. He joined the Marine Corps in 2009 and was part of Mike Battery, 3rd Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division, Marine Force Reserve and was a diesel mechanic specialist with service in Okinawa, Japan, and in Afghanistan in 2013-14. He earned the Navy & Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Honorable Service award, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, a Global War of Terrorism Service Medal, 2 Sea Service Deployment ribbons and most recent will be a Purple Heart.

Carson Holmquist was a motor transport maintenance chief and was one of five service members killed in an attack at the Naval Operation Support Center and Marine Corps Reserve Center in Chattanooga, Tennessee, July 16, 2015. Upon his return home the town of Grantsburg gathered in the gymnasium of Grantsburg Senior High School, as there wasn't any place large enough to hold a funeral so that everyone could pay their respects to him and his families. The Marines helped with a very honorable funeral service and protected their brother until he was laid to rest. What everyone needs to know about that day is that those Marines and that sailor were defending our nation and they were taking care of each other. After that day, there has been much support from all over in many cities, and you can see the outpouring of support we have received from communities across the U.S. and service members from all branches of service as well as the over 2,000 signatures on the petition for the Memorial Highway project which are just a few of the reasons why we feel this is needed and appropriate we have seen other markers for other lost loved ones in and around the surrounding counties as well. Carson was a man's man who had the work ethic of a mechanic, a good one, he loved to fix things and he lived that passion through his entire life and made him the family and good man he became who loved his hometown, his country, wife and families. He made

many around him feel better about themselves, because that was his personality and that was how much he cared about the mission whatever it may be. He and his brothers made the ultimate sacrifice that day, and we will never forget that and naming a Highway Memorial will also ensure this for the future generations and bring some comfort to our family knowing he will be remembered and he didn't die in vain. His photo in his Marine uniform hangs on the Hall of Honor at Grantsburg High School, one of several dozen alumni recognized for their military service by our small Grantsburg community. Every year, several Grantsburg graduates enlist in the military, but our small town had largely escaped suffering casualties after more than a decade of war. So the news of one of our own dying in uniform, not in Iraq or Afghanistan but on home soil, hit especially hard as evidenced by the large attendance for his funeral shows we are a very patriotic community.

In closing I want to share a memory - I still remember when he graduated from bootcamp we flew down to CA for the ceremony, I remember his dad not being able to see him as no one is allowed direct eye contact. I saw a handsome young man grinning in his dress uniform you could just tell that he was proud of his accomplishments and he was proud to be a Marine. As much as he always ate when at home and always stayed so thin I was in awe of how much weight and muscle he had gained during that time in training as well! He still had a rather long list of things he wanted me to make when he got home! Our family has suffered greatly from this tragedy in more ways than one can imagine and the funeral was bigger than all of us and it seems that Carson belongs to everybody. He's our son, someone's husband, father, brother, grandson neighbor and friend. Many don't know him personally, but he's no stranger and I think a memorial will ensure this patriotism and be an honor for his sacrifice on doing what he loved to do for all those he loved and while you cannot see him now make him grin that grin for all of those that pass by and give honor to his sacrifice.

