

ENROLLED SENATE  
RESOLUTION NO. 51

By: Haney, Cain, Campbell, Capps,  
Coffee, Crutchfield, Douglass,  
Dunlap, Easley, Fair, Fisher,  
Ford, Harrison, Helton, Henry,  
Herbert, Hobson, Horner,  
Johnson, Kerr, Laughlin,  
Leftwich, Littlefield, Maddox,  
Martin, Mickle, Milacek,  
Monson, Morgan, Muegge,  
Nichols, Price, Pruitt, Rabon,  
Reynolds, Riley, Robinson,  
Rozell, Shurden, Smith, Snyder,  
Stipe, Taylor, Wilcoxson,  
Wilkerson, Williams and  
Williamson

A Resolution designating a portion of State Highway  
177 the "Truman Branscum Memorial Highway"; and  
directing distribution.

WHEREAS, Truman Branscum was born in Shawnee, Oklahoma,  
graduated from Bethel High School, and attended Oklahoma State  
University where he received his Bachelor of Science degree in  
Mechanical Engineering in January 1955. He was employed by Humble  
Oil and Refining Company for six years as a Registered Professional  
Engineer then formed his own petroleum engineering consulting firm  
in 1961; and

WHEREAS, Truman Branscum served as District IV Highway  
Commissioner from March 1963 until September 1966. He was then  
appointed to the Oklahoma Board of Affairs in March 1967 and served  
as its Chair from May 1968 until June 10, 1969, when he was  
appointed Director of the Highway Department; and

WHEREAS, following his work as Highway Director, Truman Branscum  
served as Southwestern Regional Director of the United States  
Department of Labor in Dallas, Texas. After serving in that  
position for four years, he returned to Oklahoma to once again form  
his own oil company, Branscum Petroleum. However, during the early  
1980s Truman Branscum returned to government as State Director of  
the Small Business Administration in the Oklahoma City office. He  
retired from that position in 1990; and

WHEREAS, Truman Branscum was active in politics, serving in both  
Governor Henry Bellmon's and Governor Dewey Bartlett's  
administrations. In his first attempt at running for a major  
political office he lost a race for Congress by less than 300 votes

against an incumbent who had been in office for 22 years. He was not hesitant to lobby on his own behalf, as he spearheaded a bipartisan effort in the legislature in 1969 that changed state law which specified that only a civil engineer could hold the position as Director of the Highway Department. With the state law changed, Branscum, a mechanical engineer, was eligible to hold and was appointed to the position; and

WHEREAS, Truman Branscum is most well known for his years as Director of the Highway Department. During these years, the Department underwent dynamic changes in how it fulfilled its responsibilities to the people of Oklahoma. He stabilized the Department, bringing together a competent team of engineers, planners, technicians, and administrators. He ensured they had all of the resources they needed to perform their duties and then empowered them to do it. He believed that the Highway Department should operate as closely as possible to the model of private industry both in its capacity to adopt new concepts and techniques, and in its willingness to operate efficiently and economically as if it were a profit-making entity; and

WHEREAS, Director Branscum believed the Highway Department must have adequate funds for construction and maintenance of the state's transportation system. He wanted every available dollar spent for roads dedicated to maximizing service to the State of Oklahoma, while minimizing the costs involved. During his tenure, Director Branscum concentrated on providing additional services at no additional cost to the state by increasing efficiency. He was proud of the fact that the Highway Department under his leadership was able to plan construction six to ten years in advance. The Department also conceptualized the ideas of advanced heavy maintenance and right-of-way purchasing; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, Truman Branscum lost a ten-year battle with Alzheimer's disease. His family still recalls fondly the days when he was Director of the Highway Department and the enjoyment he received by working with his many friends within the Department and meeting all of the people that he served throughout the State of Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, Highway 177 from Shawnee, Oklahoma, north to Stillwater, Oklahoma, has been long known to the commuting public as the "Branscum Beeline".

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 48TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

THAT the Oklahoma State Senate directs the Department of Transportation to designate State Highway 177 north from Interstate 40 to Lincoln County the "Truman Branscum Memorial Highway" and erect suitable markers.

THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to Truman Branscum's son, Barry Branscum; daughters Leslie Masion and Lisa Rumsey; and their mother Joyce Branscum; and the Department of Transportation.

Adopted by the Senate the 15th day of May, 2002.

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Presiding Officer of the Senate