



AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE JIM LOUD THUNDER GOPHER MEMORIAL HIGHWAY IN CASCADE COUNTY; DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO INSTALL SIGNS AND TO INCLUDE THE MEMORIAL HIGHWAY ON THE NEXT PUBLICATION OF THE STATE MAP; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Jim Loud Thunder Gopher was born in 1885 in Malta, Montana, a full-blood Ojibwe of the Crane Clan; and

WHEREAS, after a period of searching and hardship following the Spanish Flu pandemic, Loud Thunder Gopher moved to Hill 57 outside of Great Falls; and

WHEREAS, the Little Shell Tribe had historic homesites on Hill 57 just below Mount Royal. The area is within the tribe's congressionally designated service area pursuant to the Little Shell Restoration Act of 2019; and

WHEREAS, Loud Thunder Gopher was a spiritual practitioner of Ojibwe traditional teachings, and he organized ceremonial practices, including the Sun Dance, Midewiwin, shaking tent, sweat lodge, Round Dance, and Give Away ceremonies. As a community organizer, Loud Thunder Gopher promoted voter registration and agricultural employment; and

WHEREAS, in 1942 Loud Thunder Gopher was selected as a member of the Landless Indians to travel to Washington, D.C., with Raymond Gray and Packy Myers to advocate for a land base; and

WHEREAS, Loud Thunder Gopher died in 1946 in Great Falls and is buried in Highland Cemetery. His descendants are enrolled in many of the tribes residing in Montana.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

**Section 1. Jim Loud Thunder Gopher memorial highway.** (1) There is established the Jim Loud

Thunder Gopher memorial highway on the existing northwest bypass and Vaughn road in Great Falls from 14th street northwest to 27th street northwest.

(2) The department shall design and install appropriate signs marking the location of the Jim Loud Thunder Gopher memorial highway.

(3) Maps that identify roadways in the state must be updated to include the location of the Jim Loud Thunder Gopher memorial highway when the department updates and publishes the state maps.

**Section 2. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an integral part of Title 60, chapter 1, part 2, and the provisions of Title 60, chapter 1, part 2, apply to [section 1].

**Section 3. Effective date.** [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,  
HB 448, originated in the House.

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Chief Clerk of the House

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Speaker of the House

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

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President of the Senate

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

HOUSE BILL NO. 448

INTRODUCED BY J. WEBER, M. NIKOLAKAKOS, T. CROWE, S. FYANT, J. SOOKTIS, E. TILLEMAN, E. BUTTREY, M. DUNWELL, W. MCKAMEY, T. RUNNING WOLF, F. SMITH, S. WEBBER, J. WINDY BOY, S. FITZPATRICK, R. MINER, D. HAWK, C. KEOGH, G. NIKOLAKAKOS, J. TREBAS

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