

MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY ACROSS AMERICA

FACT SHEET



During 2017, the nonprofit Bend Heroes Foundation initiated the 451 mile **Oregon Medal of Honor Highway** across Oregon on US Hwy 20 honoring Oregon's 29 Medal of Honor recipients who earned our nation's highest military award during wars from the Civil War to Vietnam War.

The Oregon Legislature and Governor Kate Brown enacted the Foundation's request into law (HB 2100) on June 20, 2017. Twelve signs (6 eastbound, 6 westbound) were dedicated along the 451 mile U.S. Hwy 20 between Newport (Pacific Ocean) and the Oregon/Idaho border (photo below). The Foundation raised \$24,700 to pay Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to fabricate and install the signs (see attached photo). This is the first of a kind tribute to Medal of Honor recipients in our nation.

Several states have designated Medal of Honor Highways, Expressways, Bridges and Overpasses honoring local Medal of Honor recipients. The highways are marked with signs of varying size and design. Most of the signs display the name of a single recipient and sometimes a single version of the Medal of Honor medal. None of those highways honor all of a state's Medal of Honor recipients, are border to border in length or display all 3 versions of the Medal of Honor medal shown above.

Since the Medal of Honor medal was first presented during the Civil War, 3,515 awards have been presented with every state represented. Nineteen recipients received 2 Medal of Honor awards. As of December 13, 2022, there are only 64 Medal of Honor recipients living in the United States of America: <http://www.cmohs.org/living-recipients.php?p=1>

To earn the Medal of Honor a member of the Armed Forces had to act with *conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty during combat at the risk of one's life against an enemy of the United States.*

Oregon House Bill 2100 creating the **Oregon Medal of Honor Highway** suggested a Medal of Honor Highway spanning our nation between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans could be created on U.S. Hwy 20 honoring all of a state's current and future Medal of Honor recipients and recipients from any state who travel on it.

At 3,365 miles in length, U.S. Highway 20 is the longest highway in our nation. Its western terminus is in Newport, OR on the Pacific Ocean, crosses 12 states with its eastern terminus in Boston, MA at the Atlantic Ocean (map below).

About 60% of all 3,515 Medal of Honor awards presented since 1863 are connected with the 12 states: Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts. The remaining 38 states account for about 40% of all recipients. Twenty-six (26) of our nation's 64 living recipients are also connected with the 12 states.

To promote more state Medal of Honor Highways, Bend Heroes Foundation requested the American Legion, VFW, Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) and Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) to publish articles on the **Oregon Medal of Honor Highway** in their national magazines.

American Legion, August, 2018: <https://www.legion.org/magazine/242661/oregons-highways-honor>

VFW, August, 2017:

http://digitaledition.qwinc.com/publication/index.php?i=424388&m=&l=&p=3&pre=&ver=html5#%22page%22:40.%22issue_id%22:424388

Vietnam Veterans of America "Veteran" May/June 2018 online publication included an article on the Oregon Medal of Honor Highway:

http://vvaveteran.org/38-3/38-3_directors.html

Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) published in its national magazine Nov. 2018:

http://www.ggdigitalpublishing.com/publication/?i=535729&article_id=3220728&view=articleBrowser&ver=html5#%22issue_id%22:535729,%22view%22:%22articleBrowser%22.%22article_id%22:%223220728%22

Veterans' groups located in the 11 states east of Oregon agreed to work with Bend Heroes Foundation and their state legislatures to create state Medal of Honor Highways on U.S. Hwy 20 in those states. The groups are led by the American Legion, Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH), Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and state coalitions of veterans' groups. The Foundation drafts legislation for each state.

Since 2017, legislatures and governors in all 12 states - Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and Massachusetts have designated their state Medal of Honor Highways covering 100% of the 3,365 mile Medal of Honor Highway Across America between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Ten states have dedicated their highways. New York and Massachusetts are formulating plans to dedicate their highways. We have unofficially named the highway "Medal of Honor Highway Across America".

Seventy four (74) signs have already been installed in 8 of those states with another 26 signs anticipated. Note the display of the 3 versions of the Medal of Honor medal displayed on signs: Army, Navy/Marines/Coast Guard and Air Force.

The 12 states along US Hwy 20 also account for about 36% of all 86,000 veterans still Missing In Action (MIA) from our nation since WWI. Of the 48 Medal of Honor recipients still MIA, 13 or 27% are also associated with the 12 states.

The 12 states along US Hwy 20 account for about 60% of all 3,515 Medal of Honor awards presented since the Civil War while the remaining 38 states account for the remaining 40%. A National Medal of Honor Highway would honor all 3,515 recipients and any future recipients from all 50 states and territories.

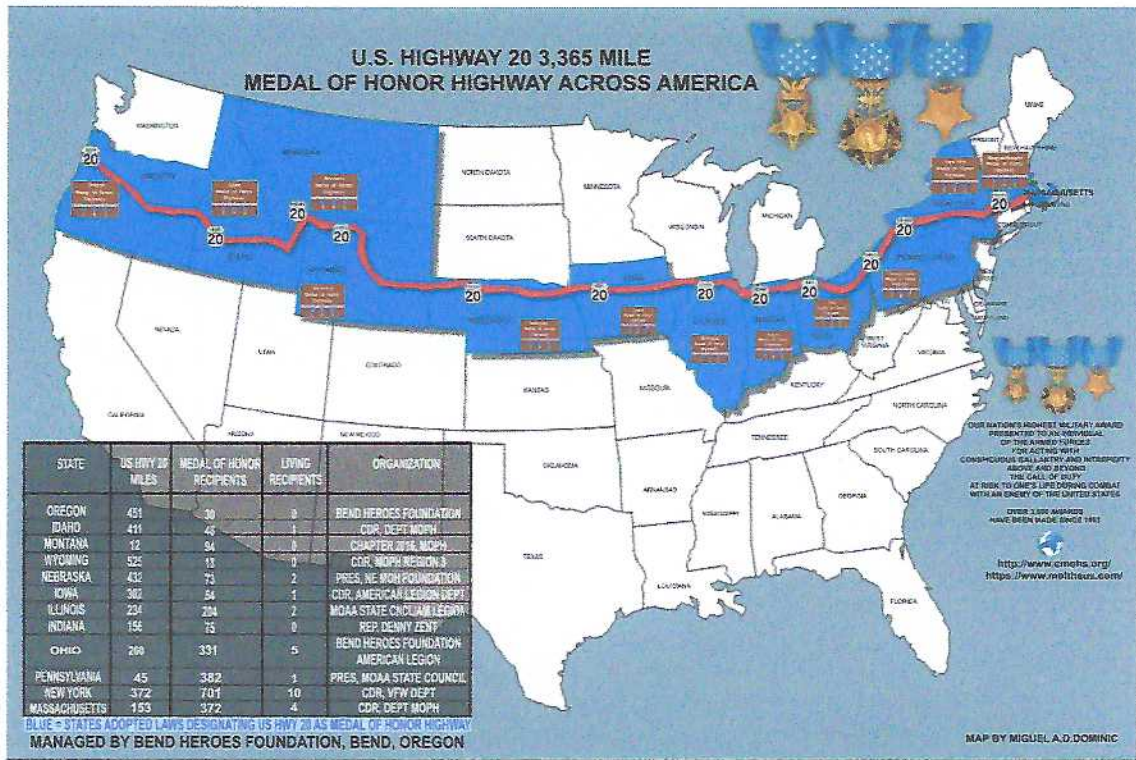
We believe the Medal of Honor Highway Across America is the first coast to coast veterans highway in the United States.

In anticipation of creating the 12 state Medal of Honor Highways, Bend Heroes Foundation has requested members the U.S. Congress from Oregon and Pennsylvania to sponsor legislation designating US Highway 20 as the "**National Medal of Honor Highway**" just as Congress did for the east-west, coast to coast Lincoln and Eisenhower Highways.

To date we have letters of support urging Congressional action from The American Legion, VFW and Vietnam Veterans of America. More letters are in process from the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Military Officers Association of America, Disabled American Veterans and Legion of Valor.

To raise public awareness of our nation's 81,600 MIAs and raise funds for **History Flight, Inc.** to recover more MIAs, "**Team Long Road**" walked nonstop across the "**Medal of Honor Highway Across America**". Two retired combat Marines began their 3,365 mile walk in Boston on the 78th anniversary of D Day. They were joined later by a fellow combat Marine. The trio completed the 6 1/2 month, 3,365 mile walk in Newport, OR, the western terminus of the highway on December 17. TLR website: <https://teamlongroad.com/> Designation of the last of 12 state Medal of Honor Highways occurred when TLR crossed into Oregon.

For further information, contact: Dick Tobiason, Chairman, Bend Heroes Foundation and Project Manager, Oregon Medal of Honor Highway, Medal of Honor Highway Across America and National Medal of Honor Highway dtobiason@bendcable.com, 541.390.9932.



MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY ACROSS AMERICA

Map of the 3,365 mile U.S. Highway 20 crossing 12 States between Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and Massachusetts have designated their state Medal of Honor Highways



OREGON MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY SIGN AT NEWPORT (1 of 12 signs on 451 miles of highway). FIRST BORDER TO BORDER STATE MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY IN USA. WWII MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT ROBERT D. MAXWELL SEATED.



IDAHO MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY SIGN (1 of 11 signs on 411 miles of highway)



MONTANA MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY SIGN (1 of 2 signs on 12 miles of highway)





WYOMING MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY SIGN (1 of 15 signs on 531 miles of highway)



NEBRASKA MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY SIGN (1 of 12 signs on 432 miles of highway)



IOWA MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY SIGN UNVEILED (1 of 12 signs on 302 miles of highway)



ILLINOIS MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY DEDICATION, LA GRANGE AMERICAN LEGION POST 1941



INDIANA MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY DEDICATION, ANGOLA



INDIANA MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY SIGN NEAR OHIO BORDER (1 of 8 signs on 156 miles of highway).



PENNSYLVANIA MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY SIGN AT PA/OH BORDER (1 OF 2 signs on 45 mile highway).
"WELCOME TO PENNSYLVANIA" SIGN IN BACKGROUND



PENNSYLVANIA MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY DEDICATION PARTICIPANTS