



Rep. Tom Emmer on Emmer Calls for Improvements to U.S. Highway 12

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****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart as another individual has lost her life on U.S. Highway 12 in my home state of Minnesota. In fact, right in my neighborhood. U.S. Highway 12 is the road we drive to get to and from our hometown of Delano, Minnesota. This is one of the most dangerous stretches of road in our state. The highway has actually been called the Corridor of Death. On March 2, 2019, Marlena Anna Diederich, an 18-year-old from Delano, Minnesota, lost her life in another crash on this highway. Marlena was a student at Delano High School, a member of our hometown and a young life with so much promise. We lost her far too soon. Today, I rise to remember the life of Marlena, to remember that she was an honor student, a black belt in taekwondo, and was planning to major in biomedical sciences and minor in pre-med. Her life held endless promise. This accident, like so many on U.S. Highway 12, was tragic and senseless. Over the years, some improvements have been made to portions of U.S. Highway 12, but until massive improvements are made to the most dangerous stretch of this highway, tragic accidents will continue to occur. Since the beginning of 2019, just two months, 14 crashes have already occurred on that stretch of the highway leading into Delano and Minnesota's 6th Congressional District. More must be done and quickly. While we are committed to working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Highway 12 Safety Coalition to ensure that Minnesotans can travel safely and securely on this road, I'm inviting our Transportation Secretary Chao to visit us and see firsthand some of our most desperate transportation needs in Minnesota. At the federal level, Congress must start to exercise its obligation under Article I of the Constitution to dedicate and direct federal funds to build, maintain, and improve our federal highways, especially life-saving safety improvements. Together, we can find a solution to the safety hazard that U.S. Highway 12 poses, and together, we will.

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