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“The Home on the Range” highway officially dedicated in Smith County

“The Home on the Range” Highway was officially dedicated today during a ceremony at the Home on the Range cabin that featured Governor Sam Brownback, Transportation Secretary Mike King, Sen. Elaine Bowers and Rep. Troy Waymaster.

More than 140 years ago, Dr. Brewster Higley was looking for a home where the buffalo could roam and the deer and the antelope could play. And he found his inspiration outside of his cabin in Smith County, Kansas in 1872.

Higley put his thoughts to paper and came up with the poem, “My Western Home.” He then shared his words with Dan Kelley of Gaylord who set the poem to music. Their combined work would become “Home on the Range,” an unofficial anthem of the American West and the official state song of Kansas.

Sen. Bowers proposed Senate Bill 43 during the 2015 session to commemorate the 16-mile stretch of road. The bill, which dedicates the closest paved road to the site where Higley’s poem was written, was signed into law by Gov. Brownback in April. Commemorative signs will be located at the U.S. 36/ K-8 junction, and at the Kansas/Nebraska state line.

All costs associated with the signs, including construction, installation and future maintenance costs, must be paid for in advance, in accordance with state law.

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