

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 159

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 177

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 159—Relative to memorial highways.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 11, 2014.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 159, Chesbro. Deputy Sheriffs Deeds and Del Fiorentino memorial highways.

This measure would designate a specified portion of State Highway Route 116 in the County of Sonoma as the Deputy Sheriff Merrit W. Deeds Memorial Highway. This measure would also designate a specified portion of State Highway Route 1 in the County of Mendocino as the Deputy Sheriff Ricky Del Fiorentino Memorial Highway. The measure would request that the Department of Transportation determine the cost of appropriate signs showing each of those special designations and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources covering that cost, to erect those signs.

WHEREAS, Merrit W. Deeds was born on February 23, 1943, in Rohnerville, California, grew up in Sonoma County, and graduated from Healdsburg High School in 1960; and

WHEREAS, Merrit W. Deeds joined the United States Army in 1964 and served in Vietnam in the 81st Airborne Infantry Division; and

WHEREAS, Merrit W. Deeds first served with the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office in 1970 as a Summer Deputy and was assigned to the Guerneville Substation; and

WHEREAS, After graduating from Sacramento State University, Merrit W. Deeds moved to Alaska to attend the Alaska State Trooper Academy and, upon graduation from the academy, became an Alaska State Trooper; and

WHEREAS, Merrit W. Deeds moved back to California in 1975 with his wife and again became a Summer Deputy for the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office on May 23, 1975; and

WHEREAS, On August 23, 1975, the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office notified Merrit W. Deeds that he was to become a permanent, full-time Deputy Sheriff with the sheriff's office; and

WHEREAS, Only hours after this notification, Deputy Sheriff Deeds was patrolling State Highway Route 116 near Jenner when he stopped to talk with three men who were parked on the side of the road; and

WHEREAS, The driver of the vehicle fired two shots at Deputy Sheriff Deeds, the second of which was fatal; and

WHEREAS, Reserve Deputy Rex Nance, who was off duty, stopped to assist, and Deputy Sheriff Deeds was able to warn him that the driver had a gun, possibly saving Reserve Deputy Nance's life; and

WHEREAS, At 32 years of age, Deputy Sheriff Deeds sacrificed his life in meritorious service for the residents of the County of Sonoma and the State of California; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Deeds was survived by his wife and two small daughters; and

WHEREAS, Ricky Paul Del Fiorentino was born on May 28, 1965, in Napa California. He was one of six children, his brother, Peter, and his four sisters, Anna Marie, Jaime, Debra Amaral, and Anne Gibson; and

WHEREAS, Ricky Paul Del Fiorentino attended Napa High School, Class of 1983, the University of Oklahoma, and the Napa Valley College Police Academy; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Del Fiorentino began his law enforcement career with the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office, from 1988 to 1990, inclusive, then worked with the Fort Bragg Police Department as a Patrol Officer and Detective, from 1990 to 2000, inclusive, and finally returned to the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office as a Deputy Sheriff in 2000; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Del Fiorentino was a defensive tactics instructor, had been a member of the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office Special Weapons and Tactics team, and had been the president of the Coast Chapter of the Police Activities League; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Del Fiorentino was a very visible presence in the Fort Bragg community, and had also coached wrestling at the local high school; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Del Fiorentino was inducted into the Napa High School Hall of Fame in 1998, and won a Gold Medal in the 2003 California Police Olympics in both Greco-Roman and Freestyle wrestling; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Del Fiorentino enjoyed spending time with his family and friends, enjoyed cooking, and loved the outdoors, being an avid hunter, fisherman, and diver; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Del Fiorentino had a "larger than life" personality and went out of his way to make people feel at ease and to solve problems. He often put the needs of others ahead of his own and would reach out to help people that he did not know; and

WHEREAS, On March 19, 2014, Deputy Sheriff Del Fiorentino responded to a shooting in Cleone, a small community a few miles north of Fort Bragg in the County of Mendocino; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Del Fiorentino spotted the suspect vehicle stopped in the roadway in a residential area and was immediately ambushed by the suspect who fired numerous rifle rounds into Del Fiorentino's patrol vehicle, killing him. Seconds later the suspect fired on a Fort Bragg Police Lieutenant who killed the suspect in the gun battle; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Del Fiorentino made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of the residents of the County of Mendocino and the State of California; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Del Fiorentino is survived by his wife, Beth Marie Del Fiorentino, and his five children, and three grandchildren; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby designates the five mile portion of State Highway Route 116 immediately south of the junction of State Highway Route 1, in the County of Sonoma as the Deputy Sheriff Merrit W. Deeds Memorial Highway; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature hereby designates the portion of State Highway Route 1, between milepost marker 62.0 and milepost marker 65.0, adjacent to MacKerricher State Park in the County of Mendocino as the Deputy Sheriff Ricky Del Fiorentino Memorial Highway; and be it further

Resolved, That the Department of Transportation is requested to determine the cost of appropriate signs consistent with the signing requirements for the state highway system showing each of these special designations and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources sufficient to cover the cost of the signs for which the donations were made, to erect those signs; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the Director of Transportation and to the author for appropriate distribution.