

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 6, 2013

AMENDED IN SENATE FEBRUARY 12, 2013

Senate Concurrent Resolution

No. 4

Introduced by Senator ~~Rubio~~ Fuller

(~~Coauthor: Senator Fuller~~)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Grove and Salas)

December 6, 2012

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 4—Relative to the Vernon P. Valenzuela Memorial Highway.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 4, as amended, ~~Rubio~~ Fuller. Vernon P. Valenzuela Memorial Highway.

This measure would designate a specified portion of State Highway Route 204 in the City of Bakersfield as the Vernon P. Valenzuela Memorial Highway. The measure would also request the Department of Transportation to determine the cost of appropriate signs showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources covering that cost, to erect those signs.

Fiscal committee: yes.

1 WHEREAS, Vernon P. Valenzuela was born January 15, 1949,
2 to the late Louis and Nellie Valenzuela. He was raised in
3 Bakersfield, California, the youngest of five siblings; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1966 Mr. Valenzuela quit high school to join
5 the United States Army and volunteered to serve in Vietnam; and

6 WHEREAS, Mr. Valenzuela served in Vietnam from October
7 1967 to May 1968, when he was wounded in battle. After his

1 honorable discharge in 1969, he returned to Bakersfield and
2 obtained his high school diploma by attending night school; and

3 WHEREAS, The following September, Mr. Valenzuela became
4 the first member of his family to attend college; and

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Valenzuela discovered the large Associated
6 Veterans Students Club at Bakersfield College, and his association
7 with the organization began his life as a leader and veterans
8 advocate; and

9 WHEREAS, Mr. Valenzuela became an active student and held
10 positions as President of both the Associated Veterans Students
11 Club and the Bakersfield College Student Body; and

12 WHEREAS, After graduating with an associate of arts degree
13 in 1973, Mr. Valenzuela continued his education at California
14 State University, Bakersfield (CSUB), where he was a charter
15 member of the first student council and began working in the
16 Veterans Cost of Instruction Program (VCIP); and

17 WHEREAS, While still attending CSUB, Mr. Valenzuela was
18 hired to be Assistant Director of the Bakersfield College VCIP;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, Mr. Valenzuela obtained his bachelor's degree in
21 June 1975 and began counseling students at Bakersfield College,
22 many of whom were veterans. He touched so many people's lives
23 during his college years that for the rest of his life he would run
24 into people he knew while at college, who remembered him, who
25 were helped by him, or whose children thanked him; and

26 WHEREAS, Mr. Valenzuela received his masters degree in
27 counseling in 1977 and earned his license in marriage and family
28 therapy in 1979, specializing in treating post-traumatic stress
29 disorder (PTSD); and

30 WHEREAS, Mr. Valenzuela began his private practice shortly
31 after his marriage in 1981, focusing on veterans with PTSD. He
32 worked as a contract counselor with the Sepulveda Vet Center
33 from 1981 to 1989, inclusive; and

34 WHEREAS, During the 1990s, Mr. Valenzuela traveled to the
35 Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. and joined the
36 Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). He became the President
37 of the charter chapter of Bakersfield VVA and gradually worked
38 through local, state, and national levels of the organization; and

39 WHEREAS, Mr. Valenzuela served as VVA's California
40 president in 1993, and went on to serve on national committees

1 for PTSD, substance abuse, and the Veterans Initiative, which
2 involved several trips to Vietnam to recover MIA remains; and

3 WHEREAS, Mr. Valenzuela presented PTSD seminars
4 throughout the nation, and was called on to work with Oklahoma
5 City bomb survivors and United Auto Workers members in the
6 New York area after September 11, 2001; and

7 WHEREAS, During his involvement with VVA, Mr. Valenzuela
8 became a leading advocate for the Vet Center program, meeting
9 quarterly in Washington with Readjustment Counseling Services
10 Director Dr. Alfonso Batres to discuss issues related to the Vet
11 Center program; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1997, Mr. Valenzuela made a conscious decision
13 to bring his efforts to a more local level and was welcomed into
14 the Kern County Network for Children. His efforts over the last
15 decade included advocating for children and bridging the gap of
16 community services for veterans. Throughout the late 1990s, he
17 collaborated with the network to raise funds for graduating seniors
18 and families in need during the holiday season within Kern County;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, In April 2008, Mr. Valenzuela was recruited to be
21 the first Team Leader for the new Bakersfield Vet Center, helping
22 to establish a much needed counseling resource for combat veterans
23 throughout Kern County; and

24 WHEREAS, As Team Leader of Bakersfield Vet Center, Mr.
25 Valenzuela's goal was to meet all needs of the veterans, and make
26 the vet center a safe haven, a place where veterans could come for
27 any help or need. He wanted the vet center in Bakersfield to be a
28 model for all other vet centers, knowing that the people of
29 Bakersfield are truly unique in their giving capacity and
30 collaborative efforts; and

31 WHEREAS, In addition to providing counseling and overseeing
32 the operation of the vet center, Mr. Valenzuela was instrumental
33 in beginning the Veterans Justice Program in Kern County and,
34 along with other veterans and community resources, created and
35 chaired the newly formed Kern County Veterans Collaborative.
36 Mr. Valenzuela's goal was not just to provide counseling services,
37 but also to provide any service or answer any question a veteran
38 may have; and

1 WHEREAS, Mr. Valenzuela passed away at 63 years of age on
2 Monday, March 26, 2012, overlooking the ocean and surrounded
3 by his family; and

4 WHEREAS, Vernon P. Valenzuela is survived by his wife of
5 30 years, Lise, and their three grown children, Robert, Alison, and
6 Katie, all of whom are very proud to have been his family; now,
7 therefore, be it

8 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
9 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature hereby designates the
10 portion of State Highway Route 204 between F Street and Q Street
11 in the City of Bakersfield as the Vernon P. Valenzuela Memorial
12 Highway; and be it further

13 *Resolved*, That the Department of Transportation is requested
14 to determine the cost of appropriate signs consistent with the
15 signing requirements for the state highway system showing this
16 special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate
17 sources sufficient to cover the cost, to erect those signs; and be it
18 further

19 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
20 this resolution to the Department of Transportation and to the
21 author for appropriate distribution.