

Introduced by Senator Walters
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Mansoor)

August 4, 2014

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 136—Relative to the Laguna Beach Police Officer Jon S. Coutchie Memorial Highway.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 136, as introduced, Walters. Laguna Beach Police Officer Jon S. Coutchie Memorial Highway.

This measure would designate the portion of State Route 1 that traverses the City of Laguna Beach as the Laguna Beach Police Officer Jon S. Coutchie 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 to cover that cost, to erect those signs.

Fiscal committee: yes.

- 1 WHEREAS, Jon S. Coutchie was born on October 2, 1971, in
- 2 Tucson, Arizona; and
- 3 WHEREAS, At just 48 hours of age, Jon and mother boarded
- 4 an airplane to join his father in southern California; and
- 5 WHEREAS, While growing up in Orange County, Jon
- 6 frequently traveled with his family to Europe, especially to Italy,
- 7 where his maternal grandparents and extended family resided; and
- 8 WHEREAS, Jon also loved to spend time with his paternal
- 9 grandparents in Yuma, Arizona; and
- 10 WHEREAS, From an early age, Jon’s adventurous spirit led
- 11 him to snow skiing, camping, waterskiing, jet skiing, motocross,

1 off-road exploration, and just about anything that would provide
2 an opportunity for an exciting challenge; and

3 WHEREAS, At Laguna Hills High School, Jon demonstrated
4 his ability to work both as a team member, as well as individually,
5 through his participation in water polo and wrestling; and

6 WHEREAS, Jon graduated from Laguna Hills High School in
7 1989 and attended Universal Technical Institute to become an
8 automotive technician; and

9 WHEREAS, Jon later continued to expand his learning through
10 his attendance at Santa Monica College and Irvine Valley College
11 before entering military service; and

12 WHEREAS, The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks weighed
13 heavily on Jon and he wanted to do his part to protect his country,
14 family, and friends; and

15 WHEREAS, Jon enlisted in the United States Army at 31 years
16 of age with the intention of becoming an elite ranger; and

17 WHEREAS, Jon attended basic and advanced individual training
18 at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where he was named the Honor Graduate
19 of his class; and

20 WHEREAS, Jon entered ranger training at Fort Benning,
21 Georgia and, at 32 years of age, he mastered the rigorous ranger
22 training, which overcame many of the younger aspirants, to become
23 a ranger; and

24 WHEREAS, Jon's four years of active duty service as an elite
25 ranger included two tours in Iraq followed by two tours in
26 Afghanistan; and

27 WHEREAS, Between tours of duty, Jon continued to hone his
28 leadership skills, including graduating from the Primary Leadership
29 Development Course as an Honor Graduate; and

30 WHEREAS, Jon lived by the ranger motto, "Rangers lead the
31 way!" and his overall leadership qualities earned him an early
32 promotion to the rank of sergeant; and

33 WHEREAS, During his military service, Jon earned numerous
34 service awards, including, the Joint Meritorious Unit Award, the
35 Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Army Commendation
36 Medal, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense
37 Service Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Iraqi
38 Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary
39 Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Combat
40 Action Badge, the Airborne Badge, and the Ranger Tab; and

1 WHEREAS, After his distinguished service in the military and
2 his honorable discharge from the United States Army, Jon realized
3 that he wanted to continue his service to the public and applied
4 for a part-time jailer position with the Laguna Beach Police
5 Department; and

6 WHEREAS, Jon showed great enthusiasm for his job and
7 excelled with each assignment; and

8 WHEREAS, Seeing Jon’s great potential, the Laguna Beach
9 Police Department sponsored Jon through the Goldenwest Police
10 Academy in 2008; and

11 WHEREAS, Jon successfully completed his police officer
12 training in March 2009 with the distinction of being the first
13 Goldenwest Police Academy Honor Graduate in the history of the
14 Laguna Beach Police Department; and

15 WHEREAS, Upon his graduation, Jon was immediately sworn
16 in as a Laguna Beach police officer; and

17 WHEREAS, Jon showed passion for his new profession and
18 enjoyed working with the diverse population of the City of Laguna
19 Beach; and

20 WHEREAS, Jon showed a passion for traffic issues and
21 displayed expertise in accident investigation; and

22 WHEREAS, Following this interest, Jon applied and was
23 selected for a coveted motor officer position with the Laguna Beach
24 Police Department in March 2013; and

25 WHEREAS, On the evening of September 21, 2013, Jon
26 traveling was northbound on the Pacific Coast Highway in an
27 attempt to locate a vehicle that was being driven recklessly and
28 that had eluded another officer; and

29 WHEREAS, While looking for that vehicle, Jon was involved
30 in a collision that took his life; and

31 WHEREAS, One of the responding officers, upon seeing Jon
32 had not survived the collision, draped an American flag over his
33 body, which is an honor befitting a hero who had served his county
34 and his community; and

35 WHEREAS, Comments from community members praised Jon
36 for being a firm, but fair, officer; and

37 WHEREAS, Jon is survived by his mother, father, step-mother,
38 brother, step-sister, and girlfriend; and

39 WHEREAS, Jon lived life with great enthusiasm and loved
40 spending time with family and friends; and

1 WHEREAS, Some would describe Jon as a “Renaissance Man”;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Jon’s quick wit made him a man with an amazing
4 sense of humor, his demeanor showed a willingness to put those
5 around him at ease, and he could always be counted on for a good
6 laugh; and

7 WHEREAS, Jon was the consummate protector, as demonstrated
8 when he once rescued a wayward rattlesnake and rather than
9 dispatching the snake, he held the snake out the window of his
10 patrol car while transporting it to a safe release point; and

11 WHEREAS, Jon was a warrior and peacemaker, a gentle and
12 compassionate soul and, in some ways, still a boy at heart; and

13 WHEREAS, While on deployment in Iraq, he wrote that he
14 wished he could gather all the Iraqi children and take them home
15 to the United States, where they would have a chance for a better
16 life; and

17 WHEREAS, As a police officer in the City of Laguna Beach,
18 Jon was frequently seen explaining to children the duties of a law
19 enforcement officer while letting them sit in his patrol car; and

20 WHEREAS, The Laguna Beach Police Department will forever
21 miss and love Jon; and

22 WHEREAS, In recognition of Police Officer Jon S. Coutchie’s
23 service to this country and the City of Laguna Beach, it would be
24 fitting to designate the portion of State Highway Route 1 that
25 traverses the City of Laguna Beach in his honor; now, therefore,
26 be it

27 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
28 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature hereby designates the
29 portion of State Highway Route 1 that traverses the City of Laguna
30 Beach as the Laguna Beach Police Officer Jon S. Coutchie
31 Memorial Highway; and be it further

32 *Resolved*, That the Department of Transportation is requested
33 to determine the cost of erecting appropriate signs, consistent with
34 the signage requirements for the state highway system, showing
35 this special designation and, upon receiving donations from
36 nonstate sources covering that cost, to erect those signs; and be it
37 further

1 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
2 this resolution to the Director of Transportation and to the author
3 for appropriate distribution.

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