

Date of Hearing: June 22, 2015

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Jim Frazier, Chair

SCR 38 (Roth) – As Amended May 6, 2015

SENATE VOTE: 38-0

SUBJECT: Memorial highways.

SUMMARY: Designates a portion of State Route (SR) 91 in the County of Riverside as the “Staff Sergeant Salvador J. Lara, Staff Sergeant Ysmael R. Villegas, and Sergeant Jesus S. Duran Memorial Highway.” Specifically, **this resolution:**

- 1) Describes the life and accomplishments of Staff Sergeants Salvador J. Lara and Ysmael R. Villegas and Sergeant Jesus S. Duran.
- 2) Designates SR 91 from Madison Street to Third Street in the County of Riverside as the Staff “Sergeant Salvador J. Lara, Staff Sergeant Ysmael R. Villegas, and Sergeant Jesus S. Duran Memorial Highway.”
- 3) Requests that the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) determine the cost of the appropriate signs, consistent with the signing requirements for a state highway system, showing special designation and, upon receiving donations from non-state sources covering that cost, to erect those signs.

EXISTING LAW: Assigns Caltrans the responsibility of operating and maintaining state highways including the installation and maintenance of highway signs.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown, but the measure requests that Caltrans only erect the appropriate signage upon receiving donations from non-state sources covering the cost.

COMMENTS: Staff Sergeant Salvador J. Lara was born in Riverside, California in 1920 and died on September 1, 1945. He is buried at Lorraine American Cemetery and Memorial in Saint-Avoid, Moselle, France. Staff Sergeant Lara was one of 24 veterans awarded the Medal of Honor through the National Defense Authorization Act which called for a review of Jewish American and Hispanic American veterans from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War to ensure that veterans deserving the Medal of Honor were not subject to prejudice. It was determined that then-Private First Class Salvador J. Lara distinguished himself by acts of gallantry for his valorous actions in Aprilla, Italy, during fight on May 27, 1944, when he aggressively led his rifle squad in neutralizing multiple enemy strong points and inflicting large numbers of casualties on the enemy. The next morning, when his company resumed the attack, Private First Class Lara sustained a severe leg wound but continued his mission without stopping to receive first aid. Private First Class Lara went on to achieve the rank of Staff Sergeant and was awarded numerous medals and awards for his accomplishments including the Medal of Honor from President Obama during a ceremony held on March 18, 2014.

Staff Sergeant Ysmael R. Villegas was born on March 21, 1924, and raised in Riverside, California. Staff Sergeant Villegas, led his squad at Villa Verde Trail in Luzon in the Philippines through a determined attack on March 20, 1945, during which Staff Sergeant Villegas was

mortally wounded. The Veterans of Foreign Wars named Post 184 in Riverside, California, in his honor, a statute was dedicated to his honor on Main Street Civic Center Courtyard in the City of Riverside and the Ysmael R. Villegas Middle School in Riverside was named in his honor.

Sergeant Duran was also one of 24 veteran who was awarded the Medal of Honor through the National Defense Authorization Act and Sergeant Durnan's daughter, Tina Duran-Ruvalcaba, accepted the Medal of Honor on his behalf from President Obama on March 2014.

Sergeant Jesus S. Duran was born on July 26, 1948, in Juarez, Mexico. He joined the United States Army on May 13, 1968, to support search and destroy missions. Sergeant Duran distinguished himself during combat operations against armed enemy in the Republic of Vietnam on April 10, 1969. Sergeant Duran received numerous other medals for his service and heroism. Upon leaving the military, Sergeant Duran pursued a career as a corrections officer at a juvenile detention center in the City of San Bernardino, California, where he dedicated many hours to mentor youth. Sergeant Duran passed away on February 17, 1977.

This resolution, designating the portion of SR 91 from Madison Street to Third Street in the County of Riverside as “Staff Sergeant Salvador J. Lara, Staff Sergeant Ysmael R. Villegas, and Sergeant Jesus S. Duran Memorial Highway” serves to honor these individuals.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

American Legion, Department of California
AMVETS, Department of California
California Association of County Veterans Service Officers
California State Commanders Veterans Council
Casa Blanca Community Action Group
Military Officers Association of America, California Council of Chapters
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 134
Vietnam Veterans of America, California State Council

Opposition

None on file

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