

Date of Hearing: April 25, 2022

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Laura Friedman, Chair

ACR 139 (Ramos) – As Introduced February 15, 2022

SUBJECT: Lance Corporal Dylan Merola Memorial Highway Overcrossing

SUMMARY: Designates the highway overcrossing in the County of San Bernardino at the Interstate 210 interchange at Haven Avenue, postmile marker 6.913, as the Lance Cpl. Dylan Merola Memorial Highway Overcrossing.

EXISTING LAW: Assigns the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) the responsibility of operating and maintaining state highways. This includes the installation and maintenance of highway signs.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown, but the measure requests that Caltrans determine the cost of appropriate signage consistent with requirements for the state highway system, and only erect the appropriate signage upon receiving donations from non-state sources covering the cost.

COMMENTS: Lance Corporal (Cpl.) Dylan Ryan Merola was born in the City of Upland, California, and grew up in the City of Rancho Cucamonga, California. As a child, he always wore military attire and dreamed of becoming a United States Marine to make a difference in the world. He graduated from Los Osos High School in the City of Rancho Cucamonga, California, in 2019.

Lance Cpl. Merola joined the United States Marine Corps after graduation, with plans, after his service to his country concluded, to attend college and study engineering. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force out of Camp Pendleton, California.

Lance Cpl. Merola was 1 of 13 United States Service Members killed in the attack on Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan, on August 26, 2021. He was deployed in Kabul for less than two weeks before the tragic attack on Hamid Karzai International Airport; and was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart medal for his sacrifice and bravery.

“Dylan was a beloved son, brother, grandson, great grandson, nephew, a great friend, and a brave soldier who paid the ultimate sacrifice at the Abbey Gate at Hamid Karzai International Airport during the evacuation,” friend Joseph Matsuoka wrote.

According to the author, “A Rancho Cucamonga hero, U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Dylan Ryan Merola, killed in an August 2021 terrorist attack in Afghanistan, ACR 139 will honor his bravery and service with the naming in his honor of the Haven Ave. overcrossing on Interstate 210 in San Bernardino County. Young Lance Cpl. Merola paid the ultimate price to fulfill his duty. It is a tremendous loss to his family and the Rancho Cucamonga community where he grew up. It is important introduce ACR 139, not only for Dylan, but also for a very loving family who also paid a great price for his service. Dylan was a much loved son, brother, grandson, great-grandson, nephew and friend.”

Committee Comments: It is the intent of the Assembly Transportation Committee to use the Memorial Highway Naming process to honor deceased Californians who have made significant public service contributions and also to reflect the diversity of our state. Currently, most named highways in California are for fallen male public safety officers, who made the ultimate sacrifice, and for whom we are indebted. However, these names do not fully represent the wide range of types of public service contributions, as well as the gender and racial diversity of California's communities. The Assembly Transportation Committee is committed to working with the Department of Transportation in the upcoming year to improve the naming process to ensure greater equity and to better represent the diversity of California.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

None on file.

Opposition

None on file.

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