

Date of Hearing: April 12, 2021

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Laura Friedman, Chair

ACR 32 (Megan Dahle) – As Amended April 5, 2021

SUBJECT: High Desert State Prison Correctional Officer Richard Bianchi Jr. Memorial Highway

SUMMARY: Designates a portion of State Route 36, from postmile 25.356 at State Route 139 to postmile R29.390 at Junction State Route 395, in the County of Lassen as the High Desert State Prison Correctional Officer Richard Bianchi, Jr., Memorial Highway.

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

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown, however the bill requests that Caltrans determine the cost of appropriate signs showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from non-state sources covering that cost, erect those signs.

COMMENTS: Richard “Rich” Alan Bianchi, Jr., 52, passed away unexpectedly in the line of duty on June 25, 2020. Rich was born in Carmichael, California, to Richard Alan Bianchi, Sr. and Carolyn Sue Bianchi. He was the middle of three children, having been born just 20 minutes after his twin sister, Cynthia “Cyndi.” They also had a younger brother, Anthony “Tony.”

Rich graduated from Lassen High School. He was honored to represent Susanville in 1984 by carrying the Olympic torch through the town. Rich loved sports as he participated in cross country running and wrestling in high school. His love of sports followed him when he had children; he loved coaching his children and attended all of their games

In 1986, Rich joined the United States Air Force. He proudly served his country for four years. While stationed at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, the Searson family sponsored Rich and they became his second family.

After Rich returned home from the military, he worked at his mom and dad’s restaurant, “Midway Café,” in Doyle, California. He would greet all customers with a smile and take their orders, while his brother, Tony, would be in the kitchen cooking. It was truly a family affair.

Rich married the love of his life, Pam, to whom he was married to for 25 years. They met at Bordertown where Pam worked. Rich would stop by to eat and do his homework. One day while at the restaurant his ’53 Chevy (his pride and joy) wouldn’t start, so Pam gave him a ride home to Doyle and the rest is history.

They had two wonderful children, Richard III, “Richie,” and Rachel. Last year he became a proud grandpa to his grandson, Christian. Rich was the happiest when he was surrounded by his family. He had a very close bond with his parents, and he was especially close to his brother, Tony.

Rich proudly spent the last 10 years of his life working as a correctional officer for the state of California. He genuinely loved and honored his job. Rich was respected by his fellow officers

and had great respect for those he worked with. He was proud to be a part of this amazing brotherhood.

Rich is survived by his wife, Pamela D. Bianchi; his son, Richard A. Bianchi, III; his daughter, Rachel L. Deese (Thomas); his grandson, Christian T. Deese; his parents, Richard A. Bianchi, Sr. and Carolyn S. Bianchi; his brother, Anthony A. Bianchi (Cheryl); along with numerous aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews, and his dogs, Midnight and Buttercup. Rich is preceded in death by his twin sister Cynthia M. Hooper, his maternal grandmother, Kathryn E. Dickison; his paternal grandparents, Paul J. Bianchi, Sr. and Mildred Bianchi.

In support, the California Professional Firefighters write, "Correctional Officer Richard Bianchi, Jr. was a dedicated husband and father, as well as an Air Force Veteran before beginning his career with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation in 2010. Serving at the High Desert State Prison since 2011, Correctional Officer Bianchi was held in high esteem by his colleagues for the kindness he showed to his colleagues and the respect and dignity given to the inmates of the facility."

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Associate Warden A. Lane, High Desert State Prison
California Professional Firefighters

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Julia Kingsley / TRANS. / (916) 319-2093