

Date of Hearing: April 18, 2016

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Jim Frazier, Chair

ACR 163 (Atkins) – As Introduced April 4, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Blue Star Memorial Highway

**SUMMARY:** Designates a portion State Highway Route 282 in the City of Coronado as a Blue Star Memorial Highway. Specifically, **this resolution:**

- 1) Describes the history and function of the Blue Star Memorial Highway program.
- 2) Designates State Highway Route 282 from Orange Avenue in the City of Coronado to Naval Air Station North Island as a Blue Star Memorial Highway.
- 3) Requests that the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) determine the costs of erecting appropriate plaques and markers, showing this special designation, consistent with the signing requirements for the state highway system, and upon receiving donations from non-state sources covering the 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 plaques and markers upon receiving donations from non-state sources covering the cost.

**COMMENTS:** After World War II, a nationwide movement was started to pay tribute to the nation's armed forces by designating various highways as "Blue Star Memorial Highways." The National Council of State Garden Clubs approved the Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker Program in 1946 and the California Garden Clubs initiated the program in California in 1947. The Legislature has approved numerous of these designations on state highways since that time.

The purpose of the Blue Star Memorial Highway project is to erect highway markers at roadside rest stops, vista points, historical sites, and other appropriate areas. The markers pay tribute to all who have served, those presently serving, and those who will serve in the nation's armed forces. The members of the Avenue of Heroes Neighborhood Association from the City of Coronado, wish to erect markers along State Highway Route 282 from Orange Avenue in the City of Coronado to Naval Air Station North Island to honor all of the military branches that formed today's North Island and current service members who are still making sacrifices for our country. The author notes that City of Coronado has the reputation of being a "Navy Town," and has a long history with the United States Armed Forces.

Specifically, this designation is intended to be in conjunction with the City of Coronado's Avenue of Heroes Banner Program to honor such heroes as Navy Seal Petty Officer First Class Jeffrey S. Taylor, who was killed in action on June 28, 2005, when the MH-47 helicopter he was aboard on a rescue mission crashed in Kunar Province, Afghanistan; the late Lt. Gen. James Harold "Jimmy" Doolittle, a Medal of Honor recipient, who led 16 American Mitchell B-25 bombers on April 18, 1942, from the deck of the aircraft carrier USS Hornet on a raid to bomb the Japanese mainland during World War II and who later commanded the powerful Eighth Air

Force in Europe and the Pacific from January 1944 to September 1945; the late Vice Adm. James Bond Stockdale, Medal of Honor recipient, Vietnam War hero, and indomitable spirit of the Hanoi Hilton, who was shot down by anti-aircraft fire after flying his A-4 Skyhawk off the deck of the aircraft carrier USS Oriskany on his last mission and was imprisoned in the Hanoi Hilton by the North Vietnamese; the late United States Navy Commander Francis Fane, who joined the Navy's underwater demolitions team during World War II, becoming a legend in Navy special forces, developing advanced diving equipment and diving techniques, and laying much of the groundwork for the future Navy Seals; Navy Commander Dean "Diz" Laird, who became the only known U.S. Navy ace to shoot down both German and Japanese airplanes during World War II; Navy Commander Theodore "Spuds" Ellyson, who, while stationed at North Island, the first naval officer assigned to aviation duty, the first passenger of a seaplane, the first pilot to land on water at night, and was the first and only commander of North Island's Camp Trouble; Maj. Gen. Joseph H. Pendleton of the United States Marine Corps, whose foresight, persuasive skills, and focused tenacity made the San Diego area the military center it is today; and, among many more heroes to be honored, Navy Capt. Leonard "Len" Kaine, who became a Top Gun fighter pilot and who was twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:****Support**

One private citizen

**Opposition**

None on file

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