

Date of Hearing: July 5, 2021

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
Laura Friedman, Chair
SCR 26 (Gonzalez) – As Amended April 19, 2021

SENATE VOTE: 37-0

SUBJECT: Detective Raul Vasquez Gama Memorial Highway

SUMMARY: Designates a portion of Interstate 710 from post mile 19.730 to post mile 24.466 in the County of Los Angeles as the Detective Raul Vasquez Gama Memorial Highway.

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: Raul Vasquez Gama was born July 21, 1963, in Santa Monica, California. Raul graduated from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's academy on May 1, 1987, and began his career as a deputy with the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department at the Pico Rivera Sheriff's Station.

After a few years, he Raul Vasquez Gama transferred to the East Los Angeles Sheriff's Station, where he worked a variety of assignments, including patrol duty, crime impact team, and as a detective in the Detective Bureau. While assigned to East Los Angeles Sheriff's Station, Raul became the team leader for the City of Cudahy where, as team leader, he introduced the "Meet a Deputy" program, a model of community policing now utilized by all Los Angeles County Sheriff stations to improve community relations. His excellent leadership and detective skills motivated the deputies who served with him to provide service to the residents of the City of Cudahy that was "Second to None".

Detective Gama served as a member of a five man team in the Cargo Criminal Apprehension Team (Cargo CATs), where he was partnered with long time friend Detective Gerardo Pachuca, who served with him at the East Los Angeles Sheriff's Station. As a member of the Cargo CATs, Deputy Detective Gama was awarded a Medal of Valor in 2004 for rescuing four children and their parents after a runaway Union Pacific freight train crashed into the family's home. Detective Gama received more than 52 commendations in his career with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

At 8:55 a.m. on Tuesday, May 1, 2007, Detective Gama was working undercover monitoring a suspect near Oxnard Street and Rhodes Avenue in North Hollywood when a vehicle crashed into his parked surveillance van. He was rushed to Providence Saint Joseph Medical Center in Burbank, where he later succumbed to his injuries. Detective Gama was killed on the 20th anniversary of his graduation from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's academy.

Detective Gama is survived by his wife Sandra, four children Monica, Crystal, Anita, and Marco Antonio, mother Ruth V. Gama, sister Hilda (Lance) Severson, and nieces Natalie Stone and

Emily Severson. Detective Gama is remembered as a wonderful husband, great father, loving son and brother, true friend, and exceptional Deputy Sheriff.

According to the author, “SCR-26 will honor Detective Gama, who served in law enforcement for 20 years. Detective Gama received the medal of Valor in 2004 for helping rescue four children and their parents after a runaway Union Pacific freight train crashed into the family’s home. He further received more than 52 commendations in his career with the Sheriff’s Department. Detective Gama also embodied the values of community service: as the team leader for the City of Cudahy, he introduced the “Meet a Deputy” program, a model of community policing now utilized by all Los Angeles. Detective Gama was a loving father and husband, and it is my privilege to recognize his service to his community with this resolution, naming a portion of the I-710 Freeway in his honor.”

In support, the Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs writes, “Detective Raul Vasquez Gama served 20 years with the Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department, where he received 52 commendations during his career. Detective Gama is remembered as a wonderful husband, great father, loving son and brother, true friend, and exceptional Deputy Sheriff.”

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs
Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department

Opposition

None on file.

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