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**ACR-181 Deputy Sheriff Dennis Wallace Memorial Highway.** (2017-2018)

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**Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 181**

**CHAPTER 147**

Relative to Deputy Sheriff Dennis Wallace Memorial Highway.

[ Filed with Secretary of State August 17, 2018. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

ACR 181, Flora. Deputy Sheriff Dennis Wallace Memorial Highway.

This measure would designate a specified portion of State Highway Route 132 in the County of Stanislaus as the Deputy Sheriff Dennis Wallace Memorial Highway. The measure would also request the Department of Transportation to determine the cost of appropriate signs showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources covering that cost, to erect those signs.

Fiscal Committee: yes

WHEREAS, Stanislaus County Deputy Sheriff Dennis Randall Wallace was born May 13, 1963, in Ceres. Deputy Sheriff Wallace was the third child and oldest son of Dennis and Nannette Wallace. He was raised in Modesto. Deputy Sheriff Wallace spent a very active childhood involved in mostly sports oriented activities. He attended Thomas Downey High School; and

WHEREAS, After high school, Deputy Sheriff Wallace went to work for Gallo Winery in the security department. It was at Gallo that he met the love of his life, Mercedes. They married in March 1987. After initially living in Modesto, they eventually bought a home in Hughson and he spent his last 26 years there with her; and

WHEREAS, In 1995, Deputy Sheriff Wallace finally got up the nerve to chase his true calling, and he enrolled in the night academy at the Ray Simon Criminal Justice Center. After graduating in 1996, he was hired by the City of Hughson as a police officer. The next year, he was hired by the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department, where he spent the next 20 years; and

WHEREAS, As a deputy, Deputy Sheriff Wallace worked in numerous assignments, including the Patrol, Community Deputy Program, Youth Services, and as a Bailiff. He enjoyed all aspects of his job, but the areas he enjoyed the most were in Youth Services as a School Resource Officer/DARE Instructor and as a Community Program Deputy for the City of Hughson. Unfortunately, Deputy Sheriff Wallace and Mercedes were not able to have children of their own, but Deputy Sheriff Wallace had a habit of turning times of despair into times of triumph. Deputy Sheriff Wallace absolutely loved kids. He loved being with them and helping them in any way he could. He and Mercedes could have easily become bitter, but instead they chose to get even more involved. One of the ways he got involved with children was as a Youth Services Deputy. He had the gift of encouragement. He was someone that cared, and he went the extra mile to show it. There is a saying, "Kids don't care what you know until they know that you care." Deputy Sheriff Wallace lived this motto; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Wallace was also a natural as a Community Deputy. He loved Hughson. He loved all the community programs, especially the ones for the kids, such as Trunk or Treat. He was often seen at the high school using his position more as a mentor or counselor than as an officer. He often used enforcement stops as opportunities to counsel people on the laws and various codes. Numerous people stated that they got stopped by Deputy Sheriff Wallace and were warned and simply educated about their habits or misdeeds. Deputy Sheriff Wallace also took money from his own pocket, and bought bike helmets and teddy bears that he kept in his trunk. He would hand them out to kids in the community when they were needed. Deputy Sheriff Wallace's favorite time of year was Christmas. He just loved the giving aspect of it. He loved helping put together and then delivering Christmas baskets and gifts to the shut-ins and the less fortunate in the Hughson area; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Wallace was given several recognitions during his career. Two that stand out involved occasions where a life was saved. In one instance, he and two other men observed a suicidal man on the railroad tracks and in the path of a train in Hughson. Deputy Sheriff Wallace was able to talk to the man to the point where he stepped away from the tracks. He was then grabbed by Deputy Sheriff Wallace and the others to keep him from taking his own life. The other incident involved Deputy Sheriff Wallace giving a small baby cardiopulmonary resuscitation and resuscitating her. Her mother later stated that if it were not for Deputy Sheriff Wallace, her daughter would not be alive today; and

WHEREAS, One of the hard lessons in life that Deputy Sheriff Wallace learned was when he failed to graduate high school. It wasn't because he wasn't capable, but rather he simply didn't apply himself. He got his general educational development diploma the same summer and went into the workforce. Deputy Sheriff Wallace didn't get to walk the stage in high school, but he didn't let that deter him. In July 2013, Dennis finally got his chance, and he walked the stage when he graduated college and obtained his bachelor's degree. Deputy Sheriff Wallace spent his adult life warning and encouraging kids about the importance of getting their education. He used his own shortcoming as a lesson for others. To emphasize the importance of an education, he and Mercedes were often seen at the middle school, high school, and college graduations of their 31 nieces and nephews, seven godchildren, and many friends' children; and

WHEREAS, Away from work, Deputy Sheriff Wallace spent 26 years as a high school football official, 16 of those as a referee. He retired in June 2016 after officiating a prestigious section final game and a high school all-star game. Deputy Sheriff Wallace also spent a few years officiating high school soccer. In both sports, it again gave him the opportunity to pour into the lives of youths; and

WHEREAS, Several of Deputy Sheriff Wallace's nieces and nephews excelled in soccer. Deputy Sheriff Wallace started getting increasingly involved. A few years ago, he and a handful of other adults from Hughson decided to form HUSL, or the Hughson Youth Soccer League. It has blossomed in four years to having nearly 500 participants. He did whatever it took to get the job done. He coached several youth teams. Deputy Sheriff Wallace was also the league president and chief cheerleader. He would stand at the gate of the soccer complex and greet people, especially the kids, as they came in with a handshake or high five and his trademark, "Howdy! Howdy! Howdy!" Deputy Sheriff Wallace lived for Saturday mornings in the fall; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Wallace was also very involved in the 4-H and FFA programs. He volunteered countless hours at the barns or at competitions helping his nieces, nephews, and neighbors with their animals. Deputy Sheriff Wallace and Mercedes would also seek out others in the community to help them sponsor animals at the fair or other competitions to make sure that the kids got their animals bought. It was always important to them that the kids had a positive experience; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Wallace went the extra distance to care for others. On several occasions Deputy Sheriff Wallace would take leftover food from the many community fundraisers and deliver it to others. He often delivered it to the dispatchers on duty at the Stanislaus County Communications Center in Modesto, the deputies on duty at the Sheriff's Department, or officers at other allied agencies; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Wallace was off work for almost two years. He didn't let issues out of his control deter him from growing and helping others. He used part of this time to complete his bachelor's degree mentioned earlier. He also donated his time, and he taught the DARE program to children in the Hughson Unified School District. The materials that were not provided by the school district were bought through donations he obtained or from money out of his own pocket; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Sheriff Wallace's death is very tragic, but not because of how it happened. His death is tragic because it was senseless, and it took from the community someone who truly cared. It took away someone who was called a friend to all. Deputy Sheriff Wallace loved serving. Deputy Sheriff Wallace loved being a protector, mentor, and a friend. Though Deputy Sheriff Wallace was taken from us on November 13, 2016, evil did not win. Honor, service, and dedication to friends, family, and community did. Deputy Sheriff Wallace leaves a legacy of giving. He leaves a legacy that lives on through his family, friends, and community; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby designates the portion of State Highway Route 132 from Root Road to McEwen Road in the County of Stanislaus as the Deputy Sheriff Dennis Wallace Memorial Highway; and be it further

Resolved, That the Department of Transportation is requested to determine the cost of appropriate signs consistent with the signing requirements for the state highway system showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources sufficient to cover that cost, to erect those signs; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the Director of Transportation and to the author for appropriate distribution.