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ACR-220 Private First Class Keith M. Williams Memorial Overpass. (2017-2018)

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 220

CHAPTER 154

Relative to Private First Class Keith M. Williams Memorial Overpass.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 220, Mathis. Private First Class Keith M. Williams Memorial Overpass.

This measure would designate the Akers Street overpass at postmile marker 6.765 on California State Route 198 in the County of Tulare as the Private First Class Keith M. Williams Memorial Overpass. The measure would request the Department of Transportation to determine the cost of appropriate signs showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources covering the cost, to erect those signs.

Fiscal Committee: yes

WHEREAS, Private First Class Keith M. Williams was the youngest of three children, born to Debbie and Frankie Williams; and

WHEREAS, While Keith was only six years old when 9–11 occurred, in the years following, he was drawn to military service by a strong sense of patriotism and a family tradition of military service; and

WHEREAS, Keith's father served in the United States Navy for 20 years, both his grandfathers served in the military, and many of his other relatives served and currently serve in various branches of the United States Armed Forces, the New Zealand Army, and the Australian Army; and

WHEREAS, Keith was a Native American of the Yokut tribe from the Tule River, having participated in powwows and Sweat Lodge Ceremonies; and

WHEREAS, Keith was an avid skateboarder, surfer, snowboarder, a lover of all types of music and the drums, and a talented musician, self-taught in piano; and

WHEREAS, Keith loved to sing, though he was a terrible singer, and loved junk food, which he was known for having at all times; and

WHEREAS, During high school, Keith was a bright, easygoing young man who participated in band, drum line, football, and link crew to assist incoming freshman students, and was a member of the homecoming court during his senior year; and

WHEREAS, Following his graduation from El Diamante High School in 2013, Keith chose to dedicate his life to serving his country and enlisted in the United States Army, graduating from basic training at Fort Benning in December 2013 from the 198th Infantry Brigade, 2-54th Infantry Battalion, Charlie Company, 4th Platoon, Red Company Mavericks; and

WHEREAS, Keith was a regular American kid who appreciated the freedoms that were made possible by those who sacrificed before him, and wrote on the back of his basic training picture that freedom was not free; and

WHEREAS, The proudest day of Keith's life was the day he marched off the field as a United States Army Infantryman, willing to die for his battle buddies and for his country; and

WHEREAS, Keith was stationed in Fort Carson, Colorado, with the 4th Infantry Division before he was deployed to Afghanistan in March 2014; and

WHEREAS, On July 24, 2014, while on a mission near Mirugol Kalay, Keith, an M249 SAW gunner, was the driver of the lead vehicle and was critically wounded after his vehicle was hit by an improvised explosive device, at which time Staff Sergeant Benjamin Prange, who was seated next to him, died; and

WHEREAS, Following the explosion, Keith was airlifted to the Role 3 Multinational Hospital in Kandahar, Afghanistan, where, at the age of 19, Keith died with a chaplain from his unit holding his hand; and

WHEREAS, Private First Class Keith M. Williams received various awards and decorations for his service in the United States Army, including the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, the Army Commendation Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with bronze service star, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the NATO Medal, and the Combat Infantryman Badge; and

WHEREAS, Private First Class Keith M. Williams made the ultimate sacrifice while performing his sworn duty, and it is fitting that we pay tribute to him and recall his devotion to duty and honor his service to his country; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature pays tribute to the memory of Private First Class Keith M. Williams, a distinguished and courageous American who gave his life for his country, by designating the Akers Street overpass at postmile marker 6.765 on California State Route 198 in the County of Tulare, as the Private First Class Keith M. Williams Memorial Overpass; 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.