
SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Senator Lena Gonzalez, Chair

2021 - 2022 Regular

Bill No:	ACR 208	Hearing Date:	8/10/2022
Author:	Davies		
Version:	8/8/22 Amended		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Melissa White		

SUBJECT: Senior Master Sergeant John James Paoletti Memorial Highway

DIGEST: This resolution designates the portion of State Route 5 between El Horno Street, at postmile 10.001 to Crown Valley Parkway, at postmile 13.776, in the County of Orange as the “Senior Master Sergeant John James Paoletti Memorial Highway.”

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Assigns the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) the responsibility of operating and maintaining state highways, including the installation and maintenance of highway signs.

Committee Policy:

The committee has adopted a policy regarding the naming of state highways or structures. Under the policy, the committee will consider only those resolutions that meet all of the following criteria:

- 1) The person being honored must have provided extraordinary public service or some exemplary contribution to the public good and have a connection to the community where the highway or structure is located.
- 2) The person being honored must be deceased.
- 3) The naming must be done without cost to the state. Costs for signs and plaques must be paid by local or private sources.

- 4) The author or co-author of the resolution must represent the district in which the facility is located, and the resolution must identify the specific highway segment or structure being named.
- 5) The segment of highway being named must not exceed five miles in length.
- 6) The proposed designation must reflect a community consensus and be without local opposition.
- 7) The proposed designation may not supersede an existing designation unless the sponsor can document that a good faith effort has uncovered no opposition to rescinding the prior designation.

This resolution:

- 1) Recounts the life and career of Senior Master Sergeant John James Paoletti.
- 2) Designates the portion of State Route 5 between El Horno Street, at postmile 10.001 to Crown Valley Parkway, at postmile 13.776, in the County of Orange as the “Senior Master Sergeant John James Paoletti Memorial Highway.”
- 3) Requests Caltrans 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.

COMMENTS:

- 1) *Purpose of the resolution.* The purpose of this resolution is to acknowledge and commemorate the life and service of Senior Master Sergeant John James Paoletti.
- 2) *Background.* Senior Master Sergeant John James Paoletti (John) was born on November 24, 1924, in Alpha, New Jersey to Domenico and Rosa Paoletti. Domenico and Rosa immigrated from Foggia, Italy, to the United States (U.S) in 1919 and Domenico went on to serve his adopted country in the United States Army in the 99th Infantry Division during World War I and, during his service, he received many distinctions of honor, including the Purple Heart.

John attended Phillipsburg High School in Phillipsburg, New Jersey, and on July 29, 1943, he and many of his fellow classmates were drafted into the United States Army to help fight in World War II. John was sent to Camp

Davis in North Carolina for basic infantry training, then traveled to Europe, with Germany as the eventual destination. John was assigned to a radar and searchlight company in the U.S. Army's 99th Infantry Division, the same Infantry Division his father served in during World War I.

As boots on the ground in Germany during the Battle of the Bulge, John and his 99th Infantry Division were the first complete infantry division to cross the Rhine River to capture the Remagen Bridge, which proved pivotal in their mission to collapse the Ruhr Pocket. John was hit with shrapnel in his right eye and knee during the battles while pushing towards the Town of Moosburg, which had several prisoners of war (POW) camps, and once at the camps they fought and liberated over 100,000 Allied POWs, including members of their own 99th Infantry Division who were captured during the Battle of the Bulge.

On May 6, 1945, World War II ended, and John was sent to join the U.S. Army's 2nd Infantry Division for the Invasion of Japan. John was awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB), Combat Central Europe Rhineland, and in 1946 John was honorably discharged. In 1949, John reenlisted in the U.S. Air Force and was sent to Francis E. Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming. John's distinguished Air Force career included numerous cryptology assignments, many of which were considered classified and top secret.

John met and married Gloria while stationed in England and they were married for 59 years. They had four daughters, eight grandchildren, and four great grandchildren. They moved to the City of San Clemente in 1996, and John dedicated his retirement years to volunteering to teach young pupils the history of the U.S. by sharing his World War II experience. John created an hour-long presentation, complete with detailed maps, war memorabilia, wartime uniforms, and photos to engage pupils on what it was like to be boots on the ground during the Battle of the Bulge.

John inspired and made history come alive for many pupils, and one pupil was especially inspired. John learned before his passing in 2020 that a young high school pupil who attended his history talk was so inspired that he now serves as an active U.S. Navy Seal, and credits John as his inspiration to serve his country. Additionally, John volunteered at the Dorothy Visser Senior Center in the City of San Clemente during his lunch hour and was active in the Italian Catholic Federation. John loved attending local veteran events, highlighted by joining his fellow veterans in Honor Flight, and he was an active participant at the South Orange County Veterans Center. He was heavily involved with local veteran organizations as well as the senior centers in the City of San Clemente

3) *Consistent with committee policy.* This resolution is consistent with the provisions of the committee's policy on highway designation.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No
None.

POSITIONS: (Communicated to the committee before noon on Monday, August 8, 2022.)

SUPPORT:

None received

OPPOSITION:

None received

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