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SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8005

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State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2013 Regular Session

By Senators Hargrove, King, Sheldon, Eide, Hobbs, Hatfield, Benton, Padden, Shin, and Chase

Read first time 02/06/13. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 TO THE HONORABLE PAULA HAMMOND, SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION, AND TO  
2 THE WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION, AND TO THE WASHINGTON  
3 STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION:

4 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of  
5 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully  
6 represent and petition as follows:

7 WHEREAS, American soldiers and sailors were taken as prisoners of  
8 war during the American Revolutionary War with the majority of  
9 prisoners kept aboard British prison hulks near New York City. In  
10 1873, a general exchange of prisoners occurred after the cessation of  
11 hostilities and recognition of American independence; and

12 WHEREAS, During the War of 1812, battlefield exchanges occurred  
13 under a general British/American cartel for exchanging prisoners. The  
14 British continued to use prison hulks and the American POW's were  
15 treated humanely until their repatriation following the Treaty of Ghent  
16 in 1814; and

17 WHEREAS, During the Mexican-American War, the Mexican forces  
18 released some American prisoners in "head for head" exchanges that  
19 occasionally took place during the war, but most American prisoners of

1 war remained incarcerated until the ratification of the Treaty of  
2 Guadalupe Hidalgo; and

3 WHEREAS, During the Civil War, both Union and Confederate forces  
4 were unprepared to detain the enormous number of POW's. 211,400 Union  
5 prisoners were held in the South and 220,000 Confederate prisoners were  
6 held in the North. Starting in 1865, the federal government began  
7 returning large numbers of prisoners to the Confederacy. After the  
8 surrender at Appomattox, the Union prisons were closed quickly; and

9 WHEREAS, The United States entered World War I in April 1917. Of  
10 the 4,120 American POW's during World War I, 147 died in captivity with  
11 most deaths resulting from wounds received in combat. Prisoner  
12 exchanges followed the signing of the armistice; and

13 WHEREAS, During World War II, 260,000 American POW's were held by  
14 Germans in Europe. Over 1,121 American POW's died in European prison  
15 camps. In the Far East, the Japanese held 124,079 American POW's.  
16 10,650 American POW's died in Japanese prison camps. In addition,  
17 there were 30,314 MIA's and 78,776 unaccounted for in the Far East; and

18 WHEREAS, During the Korean War, more than 12,000 American POW's  
19 were held by North Korea and China. Additionally, over 8,000 were  
20 classified as MIA and unaccounted for. After a truce was signed at  
21 Panmonjum, over 4,000 American POW's were returned in August 1953; and

22 WHEREAS, During the Vietnam War, 1,750 Americans were listed as MIA  
23 or unaccounted for in Vietnam and an additional 600 were MIA in  
24 neighboring Laos and Cambodia. To date, Vietnam has not accounted for  
25 all American POW's;

26 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the  
27 Washington State Transportation Commission commence proceedings to  
28 designate state route number 117 in Clallam county between the junction  
29 of state route number 101 and Marine Drive in the city of Port Angeles  
30 as the POW/MIA Memorial Highway to honor the service and sacrifice of  
31 all prisoners of war, missing in action, and those unaccounted for who  
32 served in the United States of America.

33 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately  
34 transmitted to the Honorable Paula Hammond, Secretary of  
35 Transportation, the Washington State Transportation Commission, and the  
36 Washington State Department of Transportation.

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