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**HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4016**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Riccelli, Volz, Graham, Fey, Lovick, Valdez, Maycumber, Leavitt, Tarleton, Shea, and Ormsby

TO THE WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION, AND TO THE HONORABLE ROGER MILLAR, SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION, AND TO THE WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION:

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

WHEREAS, The term Gold Star derives its origin from World War I when mothers of service members lost during the war came together to support one another in their grief. The name is derived from the gold star banner families hung in their windows allowing members of the community to know the price the family paid in the cause of freedom; and

WHEREAS, The term Gold Star has been expanded over the years to include all immediate family members left with the heavy burden of loss upon the death of a son or daughter, a spouse, a mother, a father, or a sibling while serving in the nation's armed forces; and

WHEREAS, The Eastern Washington Veterans Task Force is the state's oldest coalition of veteran support agencies whose purpose it is to support the region's military and veteran communities through delivery of social and support services, information awareness, and advocacy, and is sponsoring this initiative in support for survivor families; and

WHEREAS, 38 U.S.C. Sec. 2400 establishes the National Cemetery Administration responsible for interment of deceased service members and veterans; and

WHEREAS, 38 U.S.C. Sec. 2408 provides for federal grants to establish, operate, and maintain state veterans cemeteries; and

WHEREAS, The Washington State Veterans Cemetery serves as a final resting place, whose purpose is to inter and memorialize fallen members of our nation's armed forces and veterans, in a national shrine honoring their military service, and serves as a solemn refuge to reflect on these lives that meant so much; and

WHEREAS, Veterans cemeteries uphold the sacred trust of honoring veterans and their families with a lasting tribute that commemorates their service and sacrifice to our nation; and

WHEREAS, State route number 902 is the primary motorway leading to the Washington State Veterans Cemetery, and the last mile military members and veterans will journey to their final repose, accompanied by those closest to them; and

WHEREAS, It is of highest importance to honor the lives of those who made the ultimate sacrifice, keeping their memory alive, and recognizing the surviving families left behind who visit our Eastern Washington State Veterans Cemetery;

NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the Washington State Transportation Commission commence proceedings to name state route number 902 as the Gold Star Memorial Highway.

BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately transmitted to the Washington State Transportation Commission, the Honorable Roger Millar, Secretary of Transportation, and the Washington State Department of Transportation.