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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, It is appropriate for the members of the Illinois General Assembly to remember the many sacrifices and contributions to the cause of freedom made by the outstanding men and women who served in combat and gave the ultimate sacrifice; and

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WHEREAS, Gary J. Vasquez was born on November 12, 1974 in San Jose, California; he later moved to Highland, where he graduated from Highland High School in 1992; he subsequently earned his Bachelor of Arts in Theater from Illinois State University in 1996; he married Sarah Kramer of Chesterland, Ohio on October 14, 2006; and

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WHEREAS, Gary Vasquez entered the United States Army in January of 2000 as a Cavalry Scout; after receiving Advanced Individual Training at Fort Knox, Kentucky, he was assigned to Troop A, 1st Battalion of the 17th Cavalry Regiment (Airborne) at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; and

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WHEREAS, Sgt. Gary Vasquez began the Special Forces Qualification Course in 2002 and subsequently earned the coveted Green Beret; his perseverance in becoming a Green Beret fueled his great advancements within the military; and

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1 WHEREAS, Sgt. Gary Vasquez's dedication and passion for his
2 career was evident when he relayed stories about his missions
3 with a sparkle in his eye and a soft excitement in his voice;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, When Sgt. Gary Vasquez wasn't deployed or on a
6 training mission, he would spend time talking about and
7 planning for his own family with Sarah; he said that if he
8 couldn't work for the Army as a Special Forces Sergeant, his
9 career would be as a father to his children; and

10 WHEREAS, Sgt. Gary Vasquez's military education includes
11 the Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course, the Basic
12 Noncommissioned Officer Course, the Air Movement Course, the
13 Survival Evasion, Resistance, and Escape Course, the Basic
14 Airborne Course, the Warrior Leaders Course, the Ranger Course,
15 and the Special Forces Qualification Course; and

16 WHEREAS, Sgt. Gary Vasquez was the recipient of numerous
17 awards and decorations, including 2 Bronze Star Medals, 2 Army
18 Commendation Medals, 2 Service Medals, the Afghanistan
19 Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the
20 Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, the
21 Army Service Ribbon, the NATO Medal, the Combat Infantryman
22 Badge, the Parachutist Badge, the Air Assault Badge, the Ranger
23 Tab, and the Special Forces Tab; and

1 WHEREAS, Sgt. Gary Vasquez was one of 3 soldiers who gave
2 their lives defending America's freedom on September 29, 2008,
3 when his vehicle hit an enemy improvised explosive device while
4 conducting a combat reconnaissance patrol in the vicinity of
5 Yakhchal, Helmand Province, Afghanistan; he was riding with
6 Capt. Richard G. Cliff, Jr. of Mount Pleasant, South Carolina
7 and Sgt. First Class Jamie S. Nicholas of Maysel, West
8 Virginia; and

9 WHEREAS, Sgt. Gary Vasquez was survived by his wife, Sarah;
10 his mother, Margaret DuHasek, who passed away on August 1,
11 2014; a brother, Barry DuHasek; and a sister, Keely Vasquez; he
12 was preceded in death by his father, Frank Vasquez, a
13 lieutenant colonel who served in Vietnam; and

14 WHEREAS, Sgt. Gary Vasquez was buried with full military
15 honors at Saint Joseph Cemetery in Highland; flags in the State
16 of Illinois were also flown at half-staff in his honor from
17 October 9-11, 2008; therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
19 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
20 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we designate the section of
21 Illinois Route 160 between the intersection of Broadway and
22 Poplar Street in Highland and the intersection of West 4th

1 Street and West 2nd Street in Trenton as the Sgt. Gary J.
2 Vasquez Green Beret Memorial Highway; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the Illinois Department of Transportation
4 is requested to erect at suitable locations, consistent with
5 State and federal regulations, appropriate plaques or signs
6 giving notice of the name of the Gary J. Vasquez Green Beret
7 Memorial Highway; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
9 presented to the family of Sgt. Gary J. Vasquez, the Mayor of
10 Highland, the Mayor of Trenton, and the Secretary of the
11 Illinois Department of Transportation.