



HJ0120

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1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, It is highly fitting that the Illinois General
3 Assembly pays honor and respect to the truly great individuals
4 who have served our country; and

5 WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Paul Smith died in the service of
6 his country in Kandahar, Afghanistan, in the summer of 2009;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Smith retired from the United
9 States Army in 2006 after tours in Kuwait, Bosnia, Iraq, and
10 Afghanistan, but he did not retire from combat; and

11 WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Smith joined the Illinois National
12 Guard with the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team; and

13 WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Smith's 2009 deployment was his
14 third in Afghanistan with Troop C, 2nd Battalion, 106th Cavalry
15 Regiment, providing protection for Embedded Training Teams and
16 the Afghan army; and

17 WHEREAS, In late August of 2009, at the age of 43, Staff
18 Sergeant Smith volunteered for a mission, manning the gunner
19 position atop a Humvee, fifth in a military convoy; and

1 WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Smith typically rode in the first
2 or last vehicle in the line; he was killed instantly when an
3 improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle;
4 another soldier was killed and 2 were seriously injured in the
5 explosion; and

6 WHEREAS, The device was the first of its kind to be
7 floating in a roadside canal, and not on the side of the road
8 like all the others that had caused so much death and injury in
9 the war in Afghanistan; and

10 WHEREAS, A small home on Jay Street in East Peoria
11 currently holds a beautiful tribute to Staff Sergeant Smith,
12 including photos, a quilt, and a framed sketch by an artist who
13 has done the same for every 2,350 American fatalities in the
14 war in Afghanistan to date; and

15 WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Smith's dedication, heroism, and
16 courage will never be forgotten by his family, city, State, and
17 country; 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 8 in East Peoria beginning at the intersection
22 of Arnold Avenue and ending at the intersection of Oakwood Road

1 as the "Staff Sergeant Paul Smith Memorial Highway"; and be it
2 further

3 RESOLVED, That the Illinois Department of Transportation
4 is requested to erect, at suitable locations consistent with
5 State and federal regulations, an appropriate plaque or signs
6 giving notice of the name of the "Staff Sergeant Paul Smith
7 Memorial Highway"; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
9 presented to the family of Staff Sergeant Smith, the Mayor of
10 East Peoria, and the Secretary of the Illinois Department of
11 Transportation.