
SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8005

AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

Passed Legislature - 2013 Regular Session

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 LYNN PETERSON, 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; and

26 WHEREAS, During the Gulf War, 47 Americans were listed as POW's or
27 MIA at some point during Operation Desert Storm. At the conclusion of
28 the war, 21 POW's were repatriated, 23 bodies were recovered, 2 bodies
29 were never recovered, and one MIA case was left unresolved until 2009
30 when his remains were found in the Iraq desert; and

31 WHEREAS, During the Cold War, there was a sustained state of
32 political and military tension between Western and Eastern powers and,
33 as of 2000, there were 126 United States servicemen still unaccounted
34 for. The United States Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs
35 found evidence that some United States POW's were held in the former
36 Soviet Union after the Cold War incident and that it "cannot, based on
37 its investigation to date, rule out the possibility that one or more

1 U.S. POWs from past wars or incidents are still being held somewhere
2 within the borders of the former Soviet Union";

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

10 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
11 transmitted to the Honorable Lynn Peterson, Secretary of
12 Transportation, the Washington State Transportation Commission, and the
13 Washington State Department of Transportation.

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