S-0154.1

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8000

State of Washington 53rd Legislature 1993 Regular Session

By Senators Cantu, Winsley, Rinehart, Vognild, Bluechel, Newhouse and McDonald

Read first time 01/11/93. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

TO THE HONORABLE DUANE BERENTSON, SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION, AND TO THE WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION, 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, In the early 1900's, when discussion began about bridging Lake Washington from Seattle to Mercer Island, bridge designers faced significant obstacles. Lake Washington created a formidable water barrier to eastward commerce and development, and bridging this expanse of water presented immense technological and financial challenges; and

WHEREAS, The late Homer M. Hadley, following study at the University of Washington, began his illustrious career in the engineering field as a designer of concrete ships during World War I for the Emergency Fleet Corporation in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he began thinking of alternative purposes for the concepts used in constructing concrete ships; and

WHEREAS, At the end of World War I in late 1918, Homer Hadley returned to Seattle, Washington, to work as a civil engineer in the architectural office of the Seattle School District, and while shaving one morning at his home in the South End of Seattle, overlooking Lake

Washington, was struck by the idea of attaching concrete barges end to end to form a bridge; and

WHEREAS, Hadley pursued his idea by mapping out a location for a bridge during a Saturday afternoon. He rode to Madison Park in Seattle and walked for several miles along the ridge to the south seeking the narrowest place for a traffic tunnel. At Atlantic Street he discovered a spot upon which the present tunnel is located; and

WHEREAS, Soon after his discovery, Hadley became regional structural engineer for the Portland Cement Association and doggedly pursued his imaginative and visionary proposal in the face of opposition from residents, the Navy, and the Seattle press and by 1921 completed his design of the bridge he dreamed of personally constructing with private financing; and

WHEREAS, On June 10, 1937, shortly after the creation by the Legislature of the State Toll Bridge Authority, Hadley, having exhausted all private financing options and upon learning that the Authority planned to undertake its own survey of locations for the proposed bridge, approached Lacey V. Murrow, then director of the State Department of Highways, to discuss the proposal he had fashioned and nurtured 16 years earlier; and

WHEREAS, Following an examination of other routes by the State Department of Highways engineers, Murrow concluded that Hadley's original proposal solved every technological dilemma and was the most practical and assured Hadley that after the bridge was built, his paternity as the "father of the floating bridge" would be recognized and publicly acknowledged; and

WHEREAS, On July 2, 1940, Hadley's radically innovative idea in bridge engineering, the world's first concrete floating bridge and the longest of any such type construction, originally proclaimed as "Hadley's Folly," later heralded as the "Eighth Wonder of the World," was opened to the public amidst great fanfare, but without any recognition of Homer M. Hadley, its conceptualist; and

WHEREAS, The Mercer Island Floating Bridge, later named the Lacey V. Murrow Memorial Floating Bridge in 1967, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1987; and

WHEREAS, Homer M. Hadley was responsible for numerous other bridge designs known for their sculptural simplicity and attractiveness and characterized by maximum strength, which design portfolio includes the Mt. Si Bridge, a small curved bridge on Purdy Spit, bridges at

Eatonville, Benton City, Port Townsend, and Everett and the Parker Bridge over the Yakima River for which Hadley received a national honor in 1963 for designing the year's most beautiful short span, achieved by using an ingenious steel girder; and

WHEREAS, Recognition for Homer M. Hadley's inspiration and distinguished leadership in bridge engineering, particularly in bridging Lake Washington, and the far-reaching results of his dedicated and steadfast service to this effort is long overdue; and

WHEREAS, The companion span to the Lacey V. Murrow Memorial Floating Bridge, which opened in 1989, commonly referred to as the Third Lake Washington Floating Bridge, is presently unnamed; and

WHEREAS, The Washington State Legislature wishes to recognize and extend its congratulations to the immediate family and descendants of Homer M. Hadley for his abilities and accomplishments;

NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the Washington State Transportation Commission commence proceedings to name the Third Lake Washington Floating Bridge, the Homer M. Hadley Memorial Floating Bridge.

BE IT RESOLVED, That suitably inscribed copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Washington State Transportation Commission and to the members of Homer M. Hadley's immediate family.

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