SENATE RESOLUTION

8696

By Senators O'Ban, Zeiger, Angel, Darneille, Conway, Hunt, and Becker

WHEREAS, Amtrak train No. 501 derailed near DuPont in southern Pierce County at 7:33 a.m. on December 18, 2017, during its inaugural trip on the new stretch of track known as the Point Defiance bypass, with seventy-seven passengers and five crewmembers onboard; and

WHEREAS, Sixty-two passengers and crewmembers were injured and three passengers lost their lives; and

WHEREAS, Second Lieutenant Robert McCoy, an Army medic, was driving on Interstate 5 just as the train derailed and without thought to his welfare, immediately jumped out of his truck and began carrying the wounded out of harm's way and off the road to safety, and then climbed into a suspended train car to help those trapped inside; and

WHEREAS, Daniel Konzelman and Alicia Hoverson were also driving along Interstate 5 and came upon the scene just after the derailment and quickly helped extricate passengers from the damaged train and were a calming presence to the injured; and

WHEREAS, DuPont Mayor Mike Courts and his team were coincidentally at City Hall that morning to begin a scheduled emergency training, and they began coordination of the emergency response, opening up City Hall for emergency workers, taking in those affected, providing food, water, and triage services; and

WHEREAS, Many other pedestrians, police officers, firefighters, nurses, and doctors jumped into action to help those in need; and

WHEREAS, Pierce County Executive Bruce Dammeier and the Pierce County Incident Management Team, led by Captain Jerry Lawrence from the Pierce County Sheriff's Department and Captain Scott Engle of the Puyallup Police Department, spearheaded a multiagency response; and

WHEREAS, The responding agencies included: West Pierce Fire; Joint Base Lewis-McChord; the City of DuPont; the Pierce County Medical Examiner; the Office of the Governor; the Washington State Department of Transportation; the Washington State Patrol; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the National Transportation Safety Board; Amtrak; and the American Red Cross; and

WHEREAS, These agencies showed exemplary coordination in helping the injured and addressing the myriad of issues resulting from a catastrophe of this magnitude, with remarkable effectiveness and sensitivity to the injured and their families; and

WHEREAS, These agencies worked collaboratively and professionally to remove damaged vehicles and equipment, assess damages, and perform necessary repairs that allowed the opening of Interstate 5, an essential and critical Washington state highway, within fifty-seven hours; and

WHEREAS, Madigan Army Medical Center at Joint Base Lewis-McChord; Providence St. Peter Hospital and Capital Medical Center in Olympia; Harborview Medical Center, Virginia Mason Medical Center, and Children's Hospital in Seattle; St. Joseph Medical Center, Tacoma General, and Allenmore Hospital in Tacoma; Good Samaritan Hospital in Puyallup; and, St. Francis Hospital in Federal Way all treated victims of the train crash; and

WHEREAS, Joint Base Lewis-McChord made available its Eagles Pride Golf Course as the command center for coordination among all responding agencies and opened its restricted roadways for use by the general public to accommodate traffic from the impassable southbound lanes of Interstate 5;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate hereby honors all those who acted promptly, efficiently, and effectively in a time of extraordinary confusion and emotional stress to aid the injured and their families and console those who lost loved ones; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to those mentioned in this resolution.