

- 5) The segment of highway being named must not exceed five miles in length.
- 6) The proposed designation must reflect a community consensus and be without local opposition.
- 7) The proposed designation may not supersede an existing designation unless the sponsor can document that a good faith effort has uncovered no opposition to rescinding the prior designation.

This resolution:

- 1) Recounts the heroic efforts of Captain Vidar Anderson.
- 2) Designates the portion of State Route 395, from Rock Creek Road, at postmile R10.264, to the South Landing Overcrossing #47-48, at postmile R13.931, in the County of Mono as the “Captain Vidar Anderson Memorial Highway.”
- 3) Requests Caltrans to determine the cost of appropriate signs consistent with the signing requirements for the state highway system showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources sufficient to cover that cost, to erect those signs.

COMMENTS:

- 1) *Purpose of the resolution.* According to the author, “Captain Vidar Anderson was a hero in the Mono County community whose selfless actions saved the lives of local children. Acting without hesitation in a moment of danger, he placed the safety of others above his own and demonstrated extraordinary courage and commitment to public service. This memorial highway is dedicated in his honor to ensure his bravery, sacrifice, and lasting impact on Mono County are permanently recognized and remembered by all who travel through the region.”
- 2) *Background.* On the morning of February 19, 1990, Captain Vidar Anderson of the Long Valley Fire Protection District joined 50 fellow first responders in a desperate race to Convict Lake in the Inyo National Forest, where several teenagers had fallen through the ice. Captain Anderson was one of four local responders who fell through the ice attempting to rescue the teenagers. In the freezing waters, three of the four teenagers from nearby Camp O’Neal drowned, along with four rescuers, including Long Valley Fire Department Captain Vidar Anderson, making the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

Captain Anderson's invaluable service, dedication, leadership, and commitment contributed greatly to the safety and well-being of his community. The Long Valley Fire Protection District seeks to honor Captain Anderson's memory and service by dedicating a portion of State Route 395 in his name. This dedication will serve as a fitting tribute to Captain Vidar Anderson's service, sacrifice, and heroism, and will ensure that he is remembered by all who travel this route.

Writing in support of the resolution, Melissa Niehoff, daughter of Bill Niehoff, a former volunteer firefighter with the Long Valley Fire Department, states, "I am writing this letter as a testament to the lasting legacies that become an enduring part of someone's story.

"Although I never had the honor of meeting Captain Anderson, I came to know him through my father's stories - the ones told to me as a little girl, the stories shared while visiting the department, reading old articles, and standing quietly at the Convict Lake memorial site. In many ways, I feel like I grew up knowing the kind of man Captain Anderson was.

"The most moving account I have ever heard came from Chief Ray Turner, whom I was blessed to meet last year while visiting Long Valley. Chief Turner saw the tragedy unfold before his very eyes. Hearing him speak about that day is something you never forget. Some might say he lost a colleague. But when you hear his voice tremble and see his eyes fill with tears, you understand he didn't just lose a colleague or even an exceptionally good friend. He lost a brother.

"As we approach the 36th year since Captain Anderson's passing and the tragic events of Presidents' Day at Convict Lake, there has never been a more meaningful time to honor Captain Anderson's life and sacrifice."

3) *Consistent with committee policy.* This resolution is consistent with committee policy.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

POSITIONS: (Communicated to the committee before noon on Wednesday, June 3, 2026.)

SUPPORT:

County of Mono
Long Valley Fire Protection District

2 private citizens

OPPOSITION:

None received

-- END --