

Date of Hearing: August 25, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Lori D. Wilson, Chair

SCR 78 (McGuire) – As Introduced May 13, 2025

SENATE VOTE: 37-0

SUBJECT: Detective Sergeant Ed Wilkinson, Deputy Sheriff Brent Jameson, and Deputy Sheriff Bliss Magly Memorial Overcrossing

SUMMARY: Designates a specified overcrossing on State Route 101 as the Detective Sergeant Ed Wilkinson, Deputy Sheriff Brent Jameson, and Deputy Sheriff Bliss Magly Memorial Overcrossing and requests that the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) determine the cost of appropriate signs showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources sufficient to cover the cost, to erect those signs.

EXISTING LAW: Assigns Caltrans the responsibility of operating and maintaining state highways, including the installation and maintenance of highway signs.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown, but the measure requests that Caltrans determine the cost of appropriate signage consistent with requirements for the state highway system, and only erect the appropriate signage upon receiving donations from non-state sources covering the cost.

COMMENTS: On April 17, 1977, Detective Sergeant Edward Francis Wilkinson was returning to the helicopter hangar at the Sonoma County Airport after searching for a missing nine-year-old girl when the helicopter ran out of fuel and crashed into a field on Barnes Road, approximately one-half mile south of River Road. After his death in the line of duty while piloting the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office helicopter "Angel-1," the Wilkinson Valor Award was created in Detective Sergeant Wilkinson's memory to honor fellow officers for acts of heroism and courage above and beyond the call of duty. Detective Sergeant Wilkinson, who was a 17-year veteran of the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office, started the sheriff's helicopter program and was its first pilot. The helicopter program is still in existence and has been credited with saving many lives through its search and rescue, law enforcement, and medical air ambulance services.

Deputy Sheriff Brent Charles Jameson and Deputy Sheriff Bliss Steven Magly were killed in the line of duty on October 23, 1980, when their Sonoma County Sheriff's Office helicopter, "Angel-2," crashed and burned in heavy fog approximately one-half mile south of the Sonoma County Airport between River Road and Laughlin Road. Deputy Jameson was piloting the aircraft, with Deputy Magly serving as observer, on a search mission for a shooting suspect in the area of Ludwig Avenue, east of Llano Road, between the Cities of Sebastopol and Santa Rosa.

Deputy Jameson had served with the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office for six years and had previously served with the Novato Police Department for three years. Deputy Magly had served with the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office for three years. In order to honor Deputy Jameson and Deputy Magly, scholarships were opened in their names at Santa Rosa Junior College to assist deserving criminal justice students. Furthermore, the annual Sonoma County Sheriff's Office awards banquet was started as a result of this tragedy as a way to properly recognize the

outstanding work of the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office, and the first banquet was dedicated to Deputy Jameson and Deputy Magly. Deputy Jameson and Deputy Magly were posthumously awarded Gold Medals of Valor.

Pioneered by Detective Sergeant Wilkinson in the 1960s, the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office helicopter unit has since flown thousands of life-saving missions. Today, the helicopter unit responds to an average of 1,000 missions annually and is one of the busiest single-aircraft rescue helicopter programs in the country. Detective Sergeant Wilkinson, Deputy Jameson, and Deputy Magly are fondly remembered by friends, family, loved ones, and the broader County of Sonoma community.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

None on file

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Aimee Anspach / TRANS. / (916) 319-2093