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1   HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2   WHEREAS, It is appropriate for us to remember the many

3   sacrifices and contributions to the cause of freedom made by

4   the outstanding men and women who served in combat and gave the

5   ultimate sacrifice; and

6   WHEREAS, United States Army Staff Sergeant Matthew W.

7   Weikert was born on May 15, 1981 in Sioux City, Iowa; his

8   parents were Richard W. "Dick" and Susan B. Weikert; and

9   WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Matthew Weikert was a 2000 graduate

10 of Jacksonville High School, where he was a member of the

11 soccer team; he was also a member of the First Presbyterian

12 Church in Jacksonville; and

13   WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Matthew Weikert enlisted in the

14 United States Marine Corps in August of 2001 and served 3 tours

15 in Iraq in only 4 years; he later enlisted in the United States

16 Army, where he completed another tour in Iraq; and

17   WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Matthew Weikert was serving in

18 Afghanistan with the 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment,

19 3rd Brigade Combat Team of the 101st Airborne Division (Air

20 Assault), out of Fort Campbell, Kentucky at the time of his

21 death; as a military leader, he had the courage to endure 5

1   deployments in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom

2   and considered it his personal mission to properly prepare the

3   soldiers under his command and keep them safe from harm; and

4   WHEREAS, After his dismounted patrol encountered an

5   improvised explosive device, Staff Sergeant Matthew Weikert

6   was wounded, but was able to radio the coordinates of their

7   group; helicopters were deployed to the scene, saving the life

8   of 2 soldiers also wounded in the attack; and

9   WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Matthew Weikert was the recipient

10   of numerous decorations for his meritorious service, including

11   the Combat Action Ribbon (Navy/Marine), the Presidential Unit

12   Citation (Navy/Marine), the Meritorious Unit Commendation, the

13   Army Good Conduct Medal, the Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal,

14   the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Defense Service

15   Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal,

16   the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War

17   on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Navy

18   Reserve Sea Service with 2 Stars, the NATO Medal, the Combat

19   Infantry Badge, and the Combat Action Badge; he was also

20   awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star; and

21   WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Matthew Weikert gave his life

22   defending America's freedom on July 17, 2010, in the Paktika

23   Province in Southern Afghanistan; and

1   WHEREAS, United States and Illinois State flags throughout
2   the State of Illinois flew at half-staff from July 24 to July
3   26, 2010; in addition, Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear ordered
4   the flags to fly at half-staff on July 26, 2010 as a symbol of
5   mourning and honor for the sacrifice of Staff Sergeant Matthew
6   Weikert; and

7   WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Matthew Weikert will be remembered
8   for his love of country, his generous spirit, his patriotism,
9   and his love for his family and friends; and

10   WHEREAS, It is highly fitting that the Illinois General
11   Assembly pays honor and respect to the truly great individuals
12   who have served our country and, in doing so, have gone above
13   and beyond the call of duty to take part in truly heroic tasks;
14   therefore, be it

15   RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
16   NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
17   SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we designate the section of "Old
18   U.S. Route 36" along Morton Avenue in Jacksonville from west of
19   U.S. Route 67 to north of I-72 at Exit 68 as the SSG Matthew
20   Ward Weikert U.S. Army/USMC Memorial Highway; and be it further

21   RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be

1   presented to the family of Staff Sergeant Matthew Weikert, the

2   Mayor of the City of Jacksonville, and the Secretary of the

3   Illinois Department of Transportation.