

HCR 29 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Prepared By: C. Ross, Counsel

Meeting Dates: 5/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Recognizes and honors Sergeant First Class Richard Joseph Henkes II (1973-2006) for his service to his country.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Sergeant First Class Richard Joseph Henkes II was born on December 19, 1973, and grew up in Boring. He graduated from Clackamas High School in 1992, where he participated in wrestling and track and field. He was an avid snowboarder, and he could often be found on the side of a mountain with friends or family. He first enlisted in the United States Army in 1992, then served in the National Guard for several years before reenlisting in the regular Army. He was following a family tradition: his father served in the United States Air Force, both his grandfathers served in the Army during World War II, and his great-grandfather was a veteran of World War I. Sergeant First Class Henkes loved to have fun and was often the jokester at family gatherings, but he was also a dedicated soldier with a keen sense of duty and responsibility. He deployed to Iraq in 2006 attached to Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division. He was very proud to serve his country, believed in the mission in Iraq, and believed in the greater good. He was an outstanding soldier and a tough but fair noncommissioned officer. He was known for his kindness and decency, often giving food, water and first aid to Iraqi children. He cared deeply about the soldiers he led, was widely loved and respected, and described as the “father” of his platoon.

Sergeant First Class Henkes was killed in action on September 3, 2006, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. His courage and selfless devotion to duty and his fellow soldiers, often in the midst of harrowing combat conditions, exemplified the spirit and values of the United States Army. His many awards and decorations include the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Combat Infantryman Badge, Army Achievement Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal and Air Assault Badge. He was laid to rest at Willamette National Cemetery and is greatly missed by his family and friends.

House Concurrent Resolution 29A recognizes and honors Sergeant First Class Richard Joseph Henkes II for his service and sacrifice for his country.