

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(24)

TO: Honorable Chairman Jose "Pepe" Diaz
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: November 2, 2021

FROM: Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution urging the United States Congress to adopt S.2756 and H.R. 5142 or similar legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the 13 servicemembers killed on August 26, 2021, at the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan

Resolution No. R-1073-21

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Chairman Jose "Pepe" Diaz.



Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

GBK/jp



MEMORANDUM (Revised)

TO: Honorable Chairman Jose "Pepe" Diaz
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: November 2, 2021

FROM: 
Gen Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Agenda Item No. 11(A)(24)

Please note any items checked.

- ☐ "3-Day Rule" for committees applicable if raised
- ☐ 6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing
- ☐ 4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing
- ☐ Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget
- ☐ Budget required
- ☐ Statement of fiscal impact required
- ☐ Statement of social equity required
- ☐ Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Mayor's report for public hearing
- ☒ No committee review
- ☐ Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's present ____, 2/3 membership ____, 3/5's ____, unanimous ____, CDMP 7 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) ____, CDMP 2/3 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) ____, or CDMP 9 vote requirement per 2-116.1(4)(c)(2) ____ to approve
- ☐ Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required

Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(24)
11-2-21

RESOLUTION NO. R-1073-21

RESOLUTION URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS
TO ADOPT S.2756 AND H.R. 5142 OR SIMILAR
LEGISLATION TO AWARD THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD
MEDAL TO THE 13 SERVICEMEMBERS KILLED ON
AUGUST 26, 2021, AT THE HAMID KARZAI
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN KABUL, AFGHANISTAN

WHEREAS, on Thursday, August 26, 2021, a terrorist attack at the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan claimed the lives of 13 members of the United States Armed Forces and scores of the Afghan civilians that those United States service personnel were there to protect; and

WHEREAS, among the fallen were members of the United States Army (“USA”), United States Marine Corps (“USMC”), and United States Navy (“USN”); and

WHEREAS, the fallen included:

- USMC Lance Corporal David L. Espinoza, 20, of Rio Bravo, Texas, who was described by his mother, Elizabeth Holguin, and stepfather, Victor Manuel Dominguez, as a “great kid” and a “great guy, a great guy,” noting that they were “very proud of him”;
- USMC Sergeant Nicole L. Gee, 23, of Sacramento, California, who showed immense pride in the work she was accomplishing in Afghanistan, posting a photograph of herself on social media, just days before the attack, in which she was caring for a baby at the Hamid Karzai International Airport, captioning the photograph with “I love my job”;

- USMC Staff Sergeant Darin T. Hoover, 31, of Salt Lake City, Utah, whose father described him as his hero and who was honored by Utah Governor Spencer Cox for his “tremendous bravery and commitment to his country”;
- USA Staff Sergeant Ryan C. Knauss, 23, of Corryton, Tennessee, whose stepmother, Linnae Knauss, described him as a “super-smart hilarious young man,” whose grandfather, Wayne Knauss, described him as “a motivated young man who loved his country,” and whose wife, Alena Knauss, expressed that neither she nor her late husband would have regrets about the manner in which he died, because his service in the Armed Forces was “the ultimate honor he could give back to his country”;
- USMC Corporal Hunter Lopez, 22, of Indio, California, who is the son of two Riverside County Sheriff’s Department officers, Captain Hernan Lopez and Deputy Alicia Lopez, and who planned on following in his parents’ footsteps when he returned from his deployment, having participated in the department’s explorer program while he was in high school;
- USMC Corporal Rylee J. McCollum, 20, of Jackson, Wyoming, recently married and expecting his first child, who was described by his sister, Cheyenne, as a person who “touched everybody’s heart” and, had he not died while living his dream of serving the United States as a Marine, was “going to be the best dad”;
- USMC Lance Corporal Dylan R. Merola, 20, of Rancho Cucamonga, California, who was described by his mother, Cheryl Merola, as “one of the best kids ever,” who “would give anything for anybody”;

- USMC Lance Corporal Kareem Nikoui, 20, of Norco, California, who according to his father, Steve Nikoui, felt “no hesitation” in being called to duty and was credited with rescuing three families in Kabul and had returned to a crowd to rescue a child when the attack took place;
- USMC Corporal Daegan W. Page, 23, of Omaha Nebraska, whose family remembered him as one who had a “tough outer shell and giant heart” and who planned on going to trade school to become a lineman after his enlistment ended;
- USMC Sergeant Johanny Rosario Pichardo, 25, of Lawrence, Massachusetts, whose mother described her as a vibrant young person who wanted to give back to the community;
- USMC Corporal Humberto A. Sanchez, 22, of Logansport, Indiana, who was described by the principal of his high school, Matt Jones, as “a bright, athletic young man who was popular, well-liked by his soccer teammates, classmates, and teachers” and was “honored to be putting on the Marine uniform and serving his country”;
- USMC Lance Corporal Jared M. Schmitz, 20, of Saint Charles, Missouri, whose father described him as “my baby boy . . . my son . . . my marine . . . my warrior . . . my soul,” who would never be forgotten as his hero; and
- USN Hospitalman Maxton W. Soviak, 22, of Berlin Heights, Ohio, whose family described him as “a wonderful son who loved his family, his community, and was proud to serve in the [United States] Navy” and whose former high school teacher, Vince Ragnoni, described him as always smiling and “good for pulling shenanigans” and “get[ting] other people to laugh”; and

WHEREAS, the Congressional Gold Medal is one the highest awards granted by the United States and also one of its oldest, having been granted to deserving Americans by the Continental Congress in the 1700s; and

WHEREAS, among the recipients of the Congressional Gold Medal are General George Washington, Major General Horatio Gates, John Paul Jones, Wilbur and Orville Wright, and the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders; and

WHEREAS, according to a Congressional Research Service report from April 8, 2021, the Congressional Gold Medal is typically awarded to express gratitude for distinguished contributions, dramatize the virtues of patriotism, and perpetuate the remembrance of great events; and

WHEREAS, on August 15, 2021, United States Senator Steve Daines (R-Montana) introduced S.2756, and on August 31, 2021, United States Representative Lisa C. McClain (R-Michigan) introduced H.R. 5142; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of S.2756 and H.R. 5142 is to award posthumously a Congressional Gold Medal to the above-mentioned servicemembers who perished in Afghanistan on August 26, 2021; and

WHEREAS, on October 25, 2021, the United States House of Representatives passed H.R. 5142, while S.2756 remains pending before the United States Senate; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 5142 and S.2756 describe how the American servicemembers killed in Afghanistan on August 26, 2021 “went above and beyond the call of duty to protect citizens of the United States and our allies to ensure they are brought to safety in an extremely dangerous situation as the Taliban regained control over Afghanistan”; and

WHEREAS, this Board agrees that it is fitting and proper to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the above-referenced servicemembers,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that this Board:

Section 1. Adopts and incorporates herein the foregoing recitals.

Section 2. Urges the United States Congress to adopt S.2756 and H.R. 5142 or similar legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the 13 servicemembers killed on August 26, 2021, at the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan.

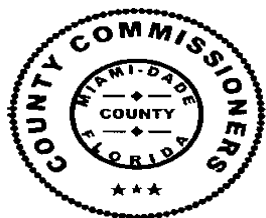
Section 3. Directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to United States Senator Steve Daines, United States Congresswoman Lisa C. McClain, and all Members of the Florida Congressional Delegation.

Section 4. Directs the County's federal lobbyists to advocate for the objective set forth in section 2 above, and authorizes and directs the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to include this item in the 2022 Federal Legislative Package when it is presented to the Board.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Chairman Jose "Pepe" Diaz. It was offered by Commissioner **Rebeca Sosa**, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner **Danielle Cohen Higgins** and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Jose "Pepe" Diaz, Chairman	aye		
Oliver G. Gilbert, III, Vice-Chairman	aye		
Sen. René García	aye	Keon Hardemon	aye
Sally A. Heyman	aye	Danielle Cohen Higgins	aye
Eileen Higgins	aye	Joe A. Martinez	aye
Kionne L. McGhee	aye	Jean Monestime	absent
Raquel A. Regalado	aye	Rebeca Sosa	aye
Sen. Javier D. Souto	aye		

The Chairperson thereupon declared this resolution duly passed and adopted this 2nd day of November, 2021. This resolution shall become effective upon the earlier of (1) 10 days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the County Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board, or (2) approval by the County Mayor of this resolution and the filing of this approval with the Clerk of the Board.



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
BY ITS BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK

Melissa Adames

By: _____
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency.

MAG

Miguel A. Gonzalez