

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Certified copy of portion of proceedings, Meeting of December 12, 2023

RESOLUTION NO. 23-160

**RESOLUTION IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF THE LIFE OF EUGENE B “JOE” THOMAS**

**WHEREAS**, Eugene “Joe” Bertram Thomas was born on April 2, 1924, in Eureka; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Thomas graduated from Eureka High School in 1942 and while in high school learned to fly at Pierce Flying School at Murray Field; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Thomas attended one semester at Humboldt State College in 1942 before joining the United States Army in 1943; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Thomas became a pilot of the B-24 Liberator in the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force of the United States Army, stationed in Italy in World War II; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Thomas and his crew were shot down over Yugoslavia and spent 41 days trapped behind enemy lines, the final crew of The Forgotten 500 to be rescued on December 28, 1944; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Thomas was assigned a position flying for the OSS after the war; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Thomas returned to Humboldt County in 1945 to resume life as a civilian, and attended Humboldt State College before graduating from Stanford University with a degree of Civil Engineer; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Thomas began a lifetime career at the California State Division of Highways, later named CalTrans; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Thomas engineered spans of Highway 101 up and down Humboldt, Del Norte, and Mendocino counties; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Thomas and his family moved from Eureka to Sacramento in 1969, when he was promoted to headquarters for CalTrans, eventually rising to Chief Maintenance Engineer for the entire state; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Thomas exemplified the Greatest Generation: service, patriotism, strength of character, hard work, generosity, and resilience, and it is therefore appropriate to designate a portion of US Highway 101 in honor of Eugene “Joe” B. Thomas.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors hereby requests that a portion of US Highway 101 (postmile 86.50 to postmile marker 89.00 near Arcata) in the County of Humboldt be designated as the Eugene B "Joe" Thomas Memorial Highway.

Dated: December 12, 2023

  
Steve Madrone, Chair  
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

Adopted on motion by Supervisor Bushnell, seconded by Supervisor Wilson, and the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors: Wilson, Bushnell, Bohn, Madrone, Arroyo

NAYS: None

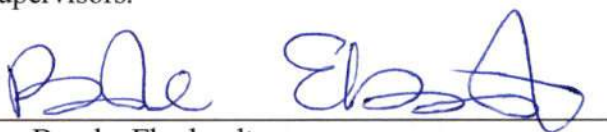
ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

STATE OF CALIFORNIA   )  
County of Humboldt    )

I, Brooke Eberhardt, Deputy Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, County of Humboldt, State of California, do hereby certify the foregoing to be an original made in the above-entitled matter by said Board of Supervisors at a meeting held in Eureka, California.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Seal of said Board of Supervisors.

  
By: Brooke Eberhardt  
Deputy Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the  
County of Humboldt, State of California