



**American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor
Memorial Society**

3156 Myers Lane - Makanda, Illinois 62958 - JanThompson@gmail.com

June 6, 2019

Honorable Jack O'Malley, Chair
House Transportation Committee
S 1385 Anderson House Office Building
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Dear Chairman O'Malley,

I am writing in support of the proposal (HB-4570) to designate a portion of State Hwy I-69 the "Bataan and Corregidor Veterans Memorial Highway".

On April 9, 1942 10,000 Americans became POWs with the surrender of the Bataan Peninsular in the Philippines. And in early May 1942, 11,500 Americans were surrendered on Corregidor, a fortress island in Manila harbor, and in the Southern Philippine islands. The surrender of American and Filipino forces on the Philippines Islands was the largest surrender in United States military history. Over 26,000 Americans were ultimately held as POWs of Imperial Japan. Nearly 11,000 died in squalid POW camps, aboard fetid "hell ships", or as slave laborers. Tragically, only 15,000 returned home to their families. Michigan had 634 who were POWs of Imperial Japan.

The ordeal of the American POWs of Japan is not just another facet of war history. It is a history of resilience, survival, and the human spirit. The sacrifices these veterans made should always be remembered and honored. A highway designated as a Memorial would be that ultimate honor.

Sincerely,

Ms. Jan Thompson
President

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF DESIGNATING A PORTION OF INTERSTATE 69 WITHIN THE CITY OF BURTON AS THE BATAAN AND CORREGIDOR VETERANS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY

WHEREAS, One of the more notorious incidents in the Pacific Theatre during World War II, a conflict that involved more than 100 million people and no fewer than 30 countries, occurred in the Philippine Islands a few months after the surprise attack by the Empire of Japan on the United States naval forces stationed at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941; and,

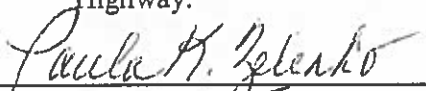
WHEREAS, The ensuing Battles of Bataan and Corregidor in early 1942 resulted in the deaths of an estimated 750,000 military combatants and civilian non-combatants, as well as the capture by the Japanese of approximately 75,000 Americans and Filipinos; and,

WHEREAS, After three months of brutal fighting between the Imperial Japanese Forces and the United States and its allies, the American forces under General Douglas MacArthur surrendered and the Japanese Army forcibly marched no fewer than 75,000 starving, sick and debilitated military prisoners-of-war and equally weakened civilian prisoners on a deadly 65-mile trek that would become known as the Bataan Death March; and,

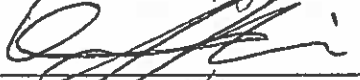
WHEREAS, The Bataan Death March resulted in the death of approximately 9,000 Filipinos and more than 1,000 Americans, and the torture and brutal treatment of tens of thousands of prisoners at the hands of their Japanese captors; and,

WHEREAS, It is fitting and proper that the City of Burton, recognizing the many veterans and their families who have served in the military, and in some cases made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation, support legislation in the Michigan Legislature to designate the portion of I-69 between Center Road and Belsay Road in the City of Burton as the "Bataan and Corregidor Veterans Memorial Highway; now,

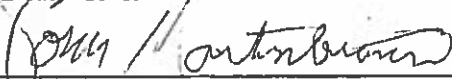
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council of the City of Burton hereby endorse and encourage passage of legislation to designate the portion of I-69 between Center Road and Belsay Road in the City of Burton as the "Bataan and Corregidor Veterans Memorial Highway.




Paula K. Zelenko, Mayor



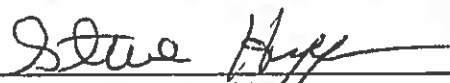
Duane Haskins, Vice President



Tom Martinbianco, Councilman



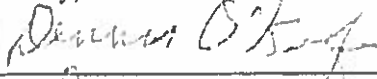
Vaughn Smith, Councilman




Steven Heffner, President



Tina Conley, Councilwoman



Dennis O'Keefe, Councilman



Danny Wells, Councilwoman