

The House Committee on Transportation offers the following substitute to HR 1685:

A RESOLUTION

1 Dedicating certain portions of the state highway system; and for other purposes.

2 **PART I**

3 WHEREAS, Mark Burkhalter is a distinguished native son of the State of Georgia, born in
4 Atlanta and raised in Alpharetta; and

5 WHEREAS, he graduated from Milton High School and earned two B.A. degrees from the
6 University of Georgia where he served as President of the International Relations Club and
7 as Chair of the University's Model United Nations Delegation, leading that organization to
8 two national titles; and

9 WHEREAS, after college he worked for several years at the United States Capitol and then
10 returned to Atlanta, where he began a long and successful career in real estate development
11 as the principal of Burkhalter Realty and Akin Properties; and

12 WHEREAS, he has been an active participant and leader in community and professional
13 activities too numerous to list and is widely known and respected in the Johns Creek area;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, he was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives in 1992 and has served
16 in this body with dedication and distinction continuously since; and

17 WHEREAS, Representative Burkhalter served as Administration Floor Leader for Governor
18 Sonny Perdue and was later elected as Speaker Pro Tempore of the House of Representatives
19 in 2005, serving in that capacity until January of 2010 when he briefly succeeded to the
20 office of Speaker of the House, making him one of the few Georgians in history to have held
21 that high office; and

22 WHEREAS, all of the members of this House who have been privileged to serve with
 23 Representative Burkhalter respect him for his great abilities, his tireless devotion to the
 24 betterment of the State of Georgia, and his many outstanding legislative accomplishments.

25 **PART II**

26 WHEREAS, Willie Lee Duckworth lived with his wife, Edna, in a blue house along
 27 Highway 242 as it edges east toward Riddleville and Bartow; and

28 WHEREAS, every couple of months, a special letter would travel the time-worn path to his
 29 door: a royalty check that made him feel like a king; and

30 WHEREAS, there were years when those checks brought more money than he made hauling
 31 pulpwood in Washington County, and the money helped put food on the table and buttons
 32 on his shirts; and

33 WHEREAS, in 1944, Willie Lee Duckworth, an unsuspecting buck private from Georgia,
 34 authored one of the most popular marching cadences in U.S. Army history; and

35 WHEREAS, at first, it simply was known as the "Duckworth Chant" but it later gained fame
 36 as "Sound Off":

37 Ain't no use in goin' home.
 38 Jody's got your gal and gone.
 39 Ain't no use in feelin' blue.
 40 Jody's got your sister, too.
 41 Sound off!
 42 One, two.
 43 Sound off!
 44 Three, four....

45 With those words, and others, Duckworth made the journey from foot soldier to footnote in
 46 military history; and

47 WHEREAS, "Sound Off" became the title of a song performed by big band leader Vaughn
 48 Monroe, and this year marks the 58th anniversary of the movie by the same name, starring
 49 Mickey Rooney; and

50 WHEREAS, although many folks in Washington County are aware of his contribution, the
51 march of time has delivered a generation of others who know little or nothing about his
52 serendipitous fame; and

53 WHEREAS, he was raised by his grandparents in a sharecropper's house not far from where
54 he lived, and when he was drafted during World War II it was the first time he had been more
55 than 100 miles from home; and

56 WHEREAS, on orders from a noncommissioned officer, he improvised his own drill for the
57 nine African American soldiers in his unit, and soon all the ranks were buzzing and keeping
58 rhythm; and

59 WHEREAS, "Sound Off" is still making noise with the blessings of the young soldier who
60 dreamed it up, and it is only fitting and proper that this marching maestro be honored by the
61 people of Georgia.

62 **PART III**

63 WHEREAS, Walter Curtis Butler, Jr., was born on December 12, 1943, in Morgan County,
64 Georgia, and passed away on August 1, 2008; and

65 WHEREAS, he was a proud product of Morgan County public schools and graduated from
66 Pearl High School, and he resided in Morgan County his entire life and was the first African
67 American elected official in Morgan County; and

68 WHEREAS, he served as a Morgan County Commissioner for over 25 years and served as
69 vice chair for many years; and

70 WHEREAS, Walter Curtis Butler, Jr., was a member of the NAACP for over 40 years, was
71 the founder of the Morgan County Branch of the NAACP, served as president of the Georgia
72 State Conference of the NAACP for 12 years, and was a Golden Heritage Life member of
73 the national association; and

74 WHEREAS, he was, despite his most humble and unassuming manner, a widely-known and
75 highly-respected Civil Rights pioneer and leader not just in Madison, Morgan County, and
76 throughout the State of Georgia, but also in the states contiguous to Georgia; and

77 WHEREAS, Walter Curtis Butler, Jr., in his many years of service as a leader in the NAACP
78 and as a Morgan County Commissioner, was a member of and garnered numerous accolades
79 from various civic and public organizations including the Georgia Association of Black
80 Elected Officials; Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG); State
81 Commission on Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday; Criminal Justice Coordinator Council
82 (2002-2006), where he served as Governor Roy Barnes' appointee; Morgan County Hospital
83 Authority; and the Morgan County Civil League, just to name a few; and

84 WHEREAS, it is only fitting and proper to dedicate a bridge as a lasting memorial to his
85 accomplishments.

86 **PART IV**

87 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
88 GEORGIA that the members of this body do hereby join in recognizing and expressing
89 appreciation to the Honorable Mark Burkhalter and that the portion of SR 141 from the
90 Gwinnett County line to the Forsyth County line in Fulton County be dedicated as the Mark
91 Burkhalter Parkway.

92 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body hereby joins in offering its condolences to the
93 family and friends of Willie Lee Duckworth upon his passing and in honoring him by
94 dedicating the portion of SR 242 in Washington County from its intersection with SR 15 to
95 the Jefferson County Line as the Willie Lee Duckworth Highway.

96 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body hereby joins in offering its condolences to the
97 family and friends of Walter Curtis Butler, Jr., upon his passing and in honoring him by
98 dedicating the bridge on US 441 South over I-20 at Exit 114 as the Walter Curtis Butler, Jr.
99 Memorial Bridge.

100 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation is authorized and
101 directed to erect and maintain appropriate signs dedicating the road facilities named in this
102 resolution.

103 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
104 and directed to transmit appropriate copies of this resolution to the Department of
105 Transportation, Mark Burkhalter, the family of Willie Lee Duckworth, and the family of
106 Walter Curtis Butler, Jr.