

**First Regular Session  
Seventy-first General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO**

**REVISED**

LLS NO. R17-1211.01 Cara Meeker x2044

**HJR17-1031**

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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 17-1031**

101     **CONCERNING THE DESIGNATION OF THE CIMARRON AVENUE BRIDGE**  
102             **SPANNING INTERSTATE 25 IN COLORADO SPRINGS AS THE**  
103             **"LIEUTENANT JAMES "JIM" DOWNING BRIDGE".**

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1             WHEREAS, James "Jim" Downing was born in Oak Grove,  
2     Missouri, on August 22, 1913; and

3             WHEREAS, In 1932, at the age of 19, Lieutenant Downing  
4     enlisted in the United States Navy, serving as Gunner's Mate 1st Class  
5     and postmaster aboard the U.S.S. *West Virginia* in Long Beach,  
6     California; and

7             WHEREAS, During his time in California, Lieutenant Downing  
8     met his wife, Morena, and the two were married just one month after the  
9     couple was stationed at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in 1941; and

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
*Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.*  
*Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

SENATE  
Final Reading  
May 9, 2017

HOUSE  
Final Reading  
May 9, 2017

1           WHEREAS, On the morning of December 7, 1941, while hosting  
2 breakfast for several servicemen at their home on base, Lieutenant  
3 Downing, his wife, and his guests heard the sound of explosions in the  
4 distance, and then an anti-aircraft shell landed right outside their home,  
5 exploding a large crater 25 feet across; and

6           WHEREAS, Realizing they were under attack, Lieutenant  
7 Downing and his fellow servicemen immediately raced to their ships,  
8 among which Lieutenant Downing's ship, the U.S.S. *West Virginia*, had  
9 been hit in quick succession by nine Japanese torpedoes, and was in  
10 flames and sinking by the time he arrived; and

11           WHEREAS, Running into danger, Lieutenant Downing slid down  
12 the gun barrel of another ship, the U.S.S. *Tennessee*, to board the U.S.S.  
13 *West Virginia*, where he fought to keep the fires from spreading to live  
14 ammunition lockers and save his fellow servicemen; and

15           WHEREAS, Upon seeing the dead and wounded, Lieutenant  
16 Downing quickly began memorizing the names of his fellow servicemen,  
17 and later wrote personal letters to their families to let them know that he  
18 was with them in their final moments; and

19           WHEREAS, On that "Day of Infamy", 2,403 people died and  
20 another 1,143 were wounded, marking the attack on Pearl Harbor as one  
21 of the deadliest foreign attacks on United States soil in modern history;  
22 and

23           WHEREAS, Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Lieutenant  
24 Downing remained in the Navy for another 16 years, eventually serving  
25 as the commanding officer of the U.S.S. *Patapsco* during the Korean War  
26 from 1952 through 1955 before his retirement in 1956; and

27           WHEREAS, Following his retirement, Lieutenant Downing and  
28 his wife, Morena, settled in Colorado with their seven children and  
29 dedicated their lives to helping others deepen their Christian faith through  
30 the Navigators ministry; and

31           WHEREAS, Lieutenant Downing has provided invaluable  
32 historical information through the recounting of his experience at Pearl  
33 Harbor, sharing his stories through public speaking, helping to develop  
34 interactive educational materials, and publishing a book of his personal

1 account of the attack; and

2 WHEREAS, Today, at 103 years old, Lieutenant Downing resides  
3 in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and is the 2nd oldest known living  
4 survivor of the attack on Pearl Harbor; and

5 WHEREAS, It is fitting that we honor the life and valor of a man  
6 devoted to his family, his country, and his God, and who bore witness to  
7 one of the most important events in the history of the United States; now,  
8 therefore,

9 *Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Seventy-first*  
10 *General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the Senate concurring herein:*

11 (1) That the Cimarron Avenue bridge spanning Interstate 25 in  
12 Colorado Springs be designated as the "Lieutenant James "Jim" Downing  
13 Bridge";

14 (2) That the Colorado Department of Transportation may accept  
15 and expend gifts, grants, and donations for the purposes of the initial  
16 placement of signs visible from Interstate 25 to mark the bridge as the  
17 "Lieutenant James "Jim" Downing Bridge"; and

18 (3) That the Colorado Department of Transportation may explore  
19 a cooperative agreement with the Board of County Commissioners for El  
20 Paso County for the maintenance of the markings for the "Lieutenant  
21 James "Jim" Downing Bridge".

22 *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent  
23 to James "Jim" Downing; Mayor of Colorado Springs, John Suthers; the  
24 City Council of Colorado Springs; the Board of County Commissioners  
25 of El Paso County; the Executive Director of the Colorado Department  
26 of Transportation, Shailen P. Bhatt; and the Colorado Transportation  
27 Commission.