

1                                   **HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 76**

2                                    (By Delegate Michael)

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6 Requesting the bridge in Hardy County, West Virginia on Route 28,  
7       crossing the South Branch of the Potomac River North of  
8       Moorefield, bridge number 16-220-0.22, be named the "Captain  
9       John Hanson McNeill CSA Memorial Bridge."

10       WHEREAS, Captain John Hanson McNeill was the best know native  
11 of Hardy County to serve in the Civil War. The son of Strother and  
12 Amy Pugh McNeill, he was born June 12, 1815 about a mile southeast  
13 of the present day bridge that carries State Route 28 across the  
14 South Branch of the Potomac River just North of Moorefield. His  
15 father died when he was only three and a half years old and "Hanse"  
16 as he was called by family and friends grew to manhood in the South  
17 Branch Valley. After his marriage to Jemima Harness Cunningham,  
18 Captain John Hanson McNeill took his family West, seeking more  
19 land. After several moves he settled in Daviess County Missouri.  
20 There he purchased a five hundred acre farm where he raised the  
21 only herd of Shorthorn Durham cattle in that area. He became a well  
22 respected member of the community and was active in the Methodist  
23 Church, becoming a lay minister; and

24       WHEREAS, Captain John Hanson McNeill, at the beginning of the

1 Civil War commanded a company of cavalry and took part in at least  
2 four battles in Missouri. His son, George was killed at Lexington,  
3 Missouri and he was severely wounded. Sometime later he and his  
4 son Jesse were captured. They eventually escaped and made their  
5 way back to Hardy County where he organized a company of cavalry  
6 that would become known as "McNeill's Rangers". Many men from  
7 Hardy and surrounding counties served in it; and

8       WHEREAS, Although officially a part of Colonel John D.  
9 Imboden's Northwestern Brigade they often operated independently  
10 and became the scourge of Union supply lines in this area. They  
11 took part in larger campaigns such as Gettysburg, and the Jones-  
12 Imboden Raid through West Virginia. In early August, 1864, Captain  
13 John Hanson McNeill advised his commanding officers not to divide  
14 forces and camp on both sides of the South Branch near where the  
15 present bridge is located. They ignored him, resulting in the  
16 Confederates being surprised and defeated by Union forces with some  
17 of the most intense fighting taking place just downstream from the  
18 bridge. This was known as The Battle of Moorefield and was the  
19 largest battle to take place in Hardy County. In a early morning  
20 attack on October 3, 1864, Captain McNeill was wounded in a  
21 successful attack on a Union encampment at Meem's Bottom, Virginia.  
22 He died from his wound five weeks later on November 10, 1864 in  
23 Harrisonburg, Virginia. He was first buried there with full  
24 Military and Masonic honors. Several months later his men returned

1 his body to Hardy County for reburial. He is buried in Olivet  
2 Cemetery in Moorefield next to the Monument to Confederate Dead,  
3 surrounded by the graves of other Confederate solders; and

4       WHEREAS, Captain John Hanson McNeill, the best know native of  
5 Hardy County to serve in the Civil War, is remembered by the  
6 community in which he lived by the founding of McNeill's Rangers,  
7 Camp 582, Sons of Confederate Veterans over ten years ago. The  
8 camp is active in honoring Confederate soldiers and preserving  
9 history and being civic minded. The camp has been instrumental in  
10 preserving the memory of Confederate soldiers from Hardy County and  
11 seeking to honor Captain John Hanson McNeill with the naming of the  
12 bridge North of Moorefield, West Virginia. It is fitting that in  
13 a state, born out of the conflict known alternatively as the Civil  
14 War and the War Between the States, we should remember all of its  
15 sons who served and died in and as a result of that conflict, as we  
16 may remember and honor Captain John Hanson McNeill; therefore, be  
17 it

18       *Resolved by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

19       That the Division of Highways is hereby requested to name the  
20 bridge in Hardy County, West Virginia on Route 28, crossing the  
21 South Branch of the Potomac River North of Moorefield, bridge  
22 number 16-220-0.22, be named the "Captain John Hanson McNeill CSA  
23 Memorial Bridge"; and, be it

24       *Further Resolved,* That the Commissioner of the Division of

1 Highways is hereby requested to cause to be fabricated signs to be  
2 erected at each entryway of the bridge, containing bold and  
3 prominent letters proclaiming the bridge to be named the "Captain  
4 John Hanson McNeill CSA Memorial Bridge"; and, be it

5       *Further Resolved,* That the Clerk of the House of Delegates  
6 forward a certified copy of this resolution to the Commissioner of  
7 the Division of Highways and to the McNeill's Rangers, Camp 582,  
8 Sons of Confederate Veterans.