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HOUSE MEMORIAL 25

51ST LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2014

INTRODUCED BY

Rick Miera

A MEMORIAL

HONORING FORMER STATE REPRESENTATIVE RICHARD T. KNOWLES,
LIEUTENANT GENERAL, UNITED STATES ARMY (RETIRED), FOR HIS
INTEGRITY, CONTRIBUTIONS AND SERVICE TO THE NATION, HIS ADOPTED
STATE OF NEW MEXICO AND THE NEW MEXICO MILITARY INSTITUTE.

WHEREAS, born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1916, Lieutenant
General Richard T. Knowles' lifetime spanned nearly a century
and his military career more than three decades, with public
service woven into the fabric of his entire life; and

WHEREAS, Richard T. Knowles left the university of
Illinois in 1942 to join the army as a second lieutenant in the
artillery; and

WHEREAS, during World War II, a young Captain Knowles took
part in the Normandy invasion and served with General and
President Dwight D. Eisenhower in Europe and later at the

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1 pentagon during the Eisenhower administration; and

2 WHEREAS, Representative Knowles also took part in the
3 Inchon landing during the Korean conflict and was awarded the
4 silver star for leading a counterattack that routed seventy-
5 five North Koreans from inside his battalion perimeter; and

6 WHEREAS, in the service of his country, General Knowles
7 earned awards that include the distinguished service medal with
8 four oak leaf clusters, the silver star medal, the bronze star
9 medal, the distinguished flying cross, the purple heart for a
10 wound received in Vietnam and twenty-five air medals; and

11 WHEREAS, General Knowles, in his typically modest fashion,
12 said of his distinguished military service and numerous acts of
13 valor, "I was just doing what I was trained to do"; and

14 WHEREAS, General Knowles retired in 1974 as deputy
15 commander of the eighth army, having held various high-level
16 commands throughout his career, including commander of the
17 196th light infantry brigade and commanding general of task
18 force Oregon, Americal division; and

19 WHEREAS, after retirement, General Knowles and his family
20 moved to Roswell, where he opened an antique store and ran for
21 the state legislature; and

22 WHEREAS, Representative Knowles served in the New Mexico
23 house of representatives, representing district 57, for eight
24 straight terms until he retired in 1998 because, as he said,
25 "It's time for a rotation."; and

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1 WHEREAS, during his long service in the house,
2 Representative Knowles served as minority floor leader and as a
3 member of the house appropriations and finance, education,
4 energy and natural resources, government and Indian affairs,
5 judiciary, rules and order of business and transportation and
6 public works standing committees; and

7 WHEREAS, he also served on a number of interim committees,
8 and he contributed to the development of many pieces of
9 landmark legislation that continue to have a positive impact on
10 New Mexico today; and

11 WHEREAS, comparing his service in the army with his
12 service in the legislature, Representative Knowles once said,
13 "...the army is a lot easier [than the legislature] because on
14 the battlefield, you can only get killed once. You can get
15 killed in committee in Santa Fe two or three times a day."; and

16 WHEREAS, "The General", as he was called by his colleagues
17 in the legislature, was known for his open mind, integrity,
18 quick wit, hard work and outgoing personality and for reaching
19 across party lines to work toward passage of meaningful
20 legislation through what he called "the art of compromise"; and

21 WHEREAS, General Knowles often said, "We represent
22 different constituents with different needs. Democracy is
23 founded on diversity. That's the power of our country and the
24 power of our state."; and

25 WHEREAS, as state representative, "The General", besides

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1 championing the people's issues, also was a strong advocate for
2 the New Mexico military institute in Roswell, which made him an
3 honorary alumnus and inducted him into its hall of fame; and

4 WHEREAS, in recognition of his efforts to establish a
5 legislative scholarship program for New Mexico young people
6 from across the state to attend the New Mexico military
7 institute, the legislature, on his retirement, renamed the
8 award the "General Richard T. Knowles Legislative Scholarship";
9 and

10 WHEREAS, the legislature now supports as many as one
11 hundred twelve scholarships, one for each legislative district,
12 for qualifying students; and

13 WHEREAS, in 1994, in recognition of his extraordinary
14 life, General Knowles was awarded the congressional medal of
15 honor society's most coveted award, the "Distinguished
16 Citizen's Award"; and

17 WHEREAS, General Knowles was preceded in death by his wife
18 of four decades, Elizabeth Kay Knowles; and

19 WHEREAS, he is survived by his daughters, Diane Buchwald,
20 Katherine Buck and Rebecca Crosby; his son, former Second
21 Judicial District Judge Richard J. Knowles; his stepsons,
22 Stanley Warfield Crosby III and Steven Wood Chaney; and his
23 daughters-in-law, Sandra Clinton and Laurie Chaney; and

24 WHEREAS, he is also survived by nine grandchildren and
25 four great-grandchildren;

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