

1 A MEMORIAL

2 RECOGNIZING VOCALIST AND MUSICIAN ROBERTO GRIEGO, A
3 NEW MEXICO LOCAL LEGEND.

4
5 WHEREAS, Roberto Griego, also known as "the voice of
6 New Mexico", is a local legend for his vocal and musical
7 talent; and

8 WHEREAS, at the Chile Ristra restaurant inside Isleta
9 casino, he is a hometown celebrity; and

10 WHEREAS, Roberto, also fondly known as the "Billy the
11 kid of rancheras", holds court at the casino restaurant,
12 saying "hola" to everyone from cooks to customers as they
13 stop to greet him; and

14 WHEREAS, in the casino on Cinco de Mayo 2018, Roberto
15 rocked a packed, sold-out crowd with towering trumpets and
16 galloping guitars; and

17 WHEREAS, Roberto was born after World War II in La Joya
18 and later moved to Albuquerque's bosque as a child, where he
19 was raised by his grandparents; and

20 WHEREAS, Roberto graduated from Rio Grande high school
21 during an era of fantastic music, with rock and rollers such
22 as Chuck Berry, Freddie King and Roy Orbison serving as early
23 influences; and

24 WHEREAS, Roberto picked up a guitar at age thirteen and
25 taught himself to play and sing by ear, without any technical

1 training; and

2 WHEREAS, Roberto's grandmother and aunt discouraged
3 Roberto's musical career and encouraged him to at least fill
4 out job applications, which he did, but Roberto always
5 returned to his music, practicing seven or eight hours a day;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, music became his salvation, his life blood and
8 a positive outlet; and

9 WHEREAS, in 1968, Roberto enlisted in the New Mexico air
10 national guard, serving thirteen months in Korea during the
11 Vietnam conflict, and while stationed overseas, he joined his
12 first rock band, playing lead and rhythm guitar; and

13 WHEREAS, returning to Albuquerque after his military
14 deployment, Roberto was employed by Yellow freight and
15 enrolled at the Albuquerque technical-vocational institute,
16 taking courses in accounting and business law, where he
17 learned to compose official, legally binding music contracts,
18 a skill he employed throughout his career; and

19 WHEREAS, on August 1, 1971, Roberto recorded his first
20 two songs: the classic bolero ranchero *Un Pobre Nomas* and
21 *No Mas Pensando*; and

22 WHEREAS, the recordings were huge successes, with
23 *Un Pobre Nomas* reaching number one on the charts in Mexico
24 City; and

25 WHEREAS, the album was so popular that it was reproduced

1 and bootlegged into eight-tracks, cassettes, compact discs
2 and long-playing records, even showing up on iTunes today,
3 with Roberto joking that he would be a rich man if his music
4 had not been pirated; and

5 WHEREAS, Roberto enjoyed the adulation of large crowds,
6 performing at Albuquerque's Tingley coliseum with El Mariachi
7 Tenampa in 1974 in front of ten thousand people; and

8 WHEREAS, Roberto has performed in Texas, Utah, Arizona,
9 California and Wyoming, but his largest markets are in
10 Colorado and New Mexico, with thirty thousand fans at a
11 two-day Cinco de Mayo event, his largest crowd to date; and

12 WHEREAS, Roberto has opened for superstars such as
13 guitar master Freddy Fender and the Latin rock band War; and

14 WHEREAS, in 2001, enraged and inspired by the tragic
15 events of September 11, Roberto wrote *Americans Will Unite*
16 for the United States troops in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

17 WHEREAS, Roberto also composed music for his fellow
18 soldiers in 1991, during the Gulf War, when he wrote
19 *Dios Bendiga a Nuestro Soldados*, or *God Bless Our Soldiers*;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, when a member of his family passes, Roberto
22 writes a beautiful song for them as they continue on their
23 eternal journey, a ritual he has performed for his late
24 father and sister; and

25 WHEREAS, after more than fifty years in the music

1 industry, Roberto has created ten studio albums and two
2 singles in English, Spanish and bilingual, playing rancheras,
3 cumbias, corridos and ballads with that northern New Mexico
4 sound mixed with a touch of Tex-Mex; and

5 WHEREAS, Roberto has won various awards for his many
6 musical contributions, including best original song, mariachi
7 song of the year and a lifetime achievement award honoring
8 New Mexico performers; and

9 WHEREAS, Roberto exemplifies an enduring legacy of music
10 from the heart;

11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
12 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that Roberto Griego, a consummate
13 vocalist and musician, be recognized as a New Mexico local
14 legend; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
16 transmitted to Roberto Griego. _____

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