

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE INCLUSION IN NEW MEXICO HISTORY COURSES OF THE NEW MEXICO ARTILLERY MEN WHO SUFFERED AND DIED ON THE INFAMOUS BATAAN DEATH MARCH OF WORLD WAR II.

WHEREAS, thousands of the twelve thousand Americans who suffered and died on the Bataan death march were New Mexicans serving in the 200th coast artillery and the 515th anti-aircraft battalion of the New Mexico national guard; and

WHEREAS, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, few New Mexicans recall the heroic efforts of those soldiers sixty years past, first fighting and then being forced to march fifty-five torturous miles through humid Pacific jungles while suffering from malaria, starvation and dehydration; and

WHEREAS, at the end of the infamous death march, the surviving Americans and more than sixty thousand Filipinos were imprisoned in intolerably inhumane conditions for more than three years before the end of the war; and

WHEREAS, this ordeal is honored in the memory of far too few adult New Mexicans and not at all in the minds of our school children, who have not been taught of these events; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the rich past of our Indian, Hispanic and frontiersmen ancestors, New Mexico history

should include at least one detailed chapter on the bravery and fortitude of those who suffered and died defending freedom on the Pacific island of Bataan, including the infamous Bataan death march;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the state department of public education be requested to develop and require inclusion of a detailed chapter of the artillerymen of the 200th coast artillery and the 515th anti-aircraft battalions of the New Mexico national guard service in the Philippines in 1941 and 1942, including the infamous Bataan death march and the subsequent years of honorable service while imprisoned, in all New Mexico public school history courses; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this material be produced within the next year and reviewed for accuracy by living veterans of that service; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that school children throughout New Mexico henceforth participate in ceremonies honoring New Mexico's veterans, especially those of the Bataan death march, so that they may absorb part of the history that contributes to their freedom today; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be sent to the New Mexico veterans' service commission, the office of the state engineer, the state department of public education and to each of the state's local school boards for

distribution to each public school principal. \_\_\_\_\_

SJM 91

Page 3