

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CUMBRES AND TOLTEC SCENIC RAILROAD TO THE OPERATION RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE RAILROAD.

WHEREAS, the Cumbres and Toltec scenic railroad is the finest and most spectacular example of steam-era mountain railroading in North America, a living museum proudly owned by the states of Colorado and New Mexico and governed by the Cumbres and Toltec scenic railroad commission formed by an interstate compact between the two states; and

WHEREAS, the nonprofit friends of the Cumbres and Toltec scenic railroad and its nonprofit affiliate, the Rio Grande railway preservation corporation, together known as "the friends", have played a substantial role over the past fifteen years in the operation, restoration and preservation of the railroad under agreements with the commission; and

WHEREAS, the friends, with its nearly two thousand members from across American and other countries, provides over twenty thousand volunteer hours each year, restoring with painstaking care the historic railroad structures and rolling stock all along the railroad in New Mexico and Colorado in addition to conducting various historic interpretation programs for visitors; and

WHEREAS, when the railroad was faced with an imminent shutdown five years ago that would have devastated the region, the friends raised the necessary funds from its members and contracted to operate the railroad; and

WHEREAS, the friends has since provided over one million three hundred

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thousand dollars (\$1,300,000) of working capital in order to keep the railroad operating, despite its deteriorated condition and despite a series of costly new federal regulatory mandates; and

WHEREAS, when the railroad was faced with having to suspend operations because its steam locomotives did not comply with new federal regulations, the friends spearheaded a public and private initiative that culminated in a recent grant of over one million dollars (\$1,000,000) from the federal government for rebuilding locomotives; and

WHEREAS, in further support of the railroad, the friends recently launched a fundraising campaign, "Another Century of Narrow Gauge Steam", which has already raised over five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in private contributions;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that, thanks to the wisdom of the commission in relying upon the friends and thanks to the generous and unstinting efforts by the friends to provide money, time and expertise, the railroad has overcome an extraordinary series of financial and regulatory shocks over the past five years, any one of which could have resulted in the railroad ceasing operations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission and the friends be requested to continue to strengthen their collaboration so that the railroad and the region it serves can further benefit from this vital public and private partnership; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the Cumbres and Toltec scenic railroad commission, the friends of the Cumbres and

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Toltec scenic railroad and the Rio Grande railway preservation corporation.