

A JOINT MEMORIAL

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON THE DEATH OF FORMER LEGISLATOR JOHN MERSHON.

WHEREAS, John Mershon, a Cludcroft democrat and once one of New Mexico's most powerful legislators, died at the age of ninety-five on July 6, 2004; and

WHEREAS, he served in the New Mexico house of representatives for twenty-four years, chairing the house appropriations and finance committee and the legislative finance committee for many of those years; and

WHEREAS, he was first elected to the house in 1958 and served through 1982, and along with chairing the house appropriations and finance committee between 1963 and 1972 and 1979 and 1982, he served as its vice chairman from 1961 to 1962 and also served as a member of the 1973 tax study committee and as chairman of the house energy committee in 1975 and 1976; and

WHEREAS, it was well-known that when Representative Mershon's was questioning witnesses, if his glasses came down to the tip of his nose and he looked over the top of them, that was a sign that the witness was just about to get it; and

WHEREAS, he is credited with creating the professional staff for the legislative finance committee; and

WHEREAS, he was born September 16, 1908 in Siloam

Springs, Arkansas, and attended schools in Arkansas and Oklahoma before moving with his father in 1938 to Mayhill, New Mexico to work in the lumber mill until it closed in 1942 because of the World War II; and

WHEREAS, he worked a quarter century as a broker of farm produce and followed that job with selling mountain real estate with Bernie Bounds; and

WHEREAS, he founded the Otero county electric cooperative, helped found the first national bank in Alamogordo and was instrumental in getting United States route 82 from Alamogordo to Cloudcroft paved; and

WHEREAS, Representative Mershon's first love, after his wife Milicent, was the Sacramento Mountain Historical Society, which he helped found in 1977 and supported through gifts and contributions, and his work on behalf of his community led to Cloudcroft's medical center being named in his honor; and

WHEREAS, he is survived by his wife of sixty-seven years, Milicent; two sons, William F. Mershon of Mayhill and James B. Mershon of Parachute, Colorado; three grandchildren; one great-granddaughter; and three sisters;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that condolences be expressed to the family of John Mershon, a determined, self-reliant and devoted New Mexican whose service to this state and his community was extraordinary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to Milicent, William F. and James B. Mershon.