

1 A JOINT MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO
3 INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO AWARD DR. VICTOR WESTPHALL A
4 CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL IN RECOGNITION OF HIS SERVICE TO THE
5 UNITED STATES.

6
7 WHEREAS, in order to honor those who fought and died in
8 the Vietnam war, and to give the survivors a spiritual home,
9 Dr. Victor Westphall built the Vietnam veterans peace and
10 brotherhood chapel, which would later become the Vietnam
11 veterans national memorial state park at Angel Fire; and

12 WHEREAS, in building the Vietnam veterans peace and
13 brotherhood chapel, Dr. Westphall honored the courage and
14 sacrifice of his own son, Victor David Westphall, III, who
15 gave his life in the Vietnam war; and

16 WHEREAS, Dr. Westphall built the Vietnam veterans peace
17 and brotherhood chapel in 1968, a period in which the nation
18 was divided over the war being fought by the United States in
19 Vietnam; and

20 WHEREAS, Americans in 1968 were deeply divided over the
21 Vietnam war, while the soldiers returning from the Vietnam
22 war were often shunned and scapegoated as blameworthy for the
23 United States' policies in southeast Asia; and

24 WHEREAS, in being the first to build a memorial honoring
25 those who had fallen in the service of their country,

1 Dr. Westphall bravely made a stand in the name of honor
2 during a time of great social unrest; and

3 WHEREAS, the congressional gold medal is the nation's
4 most distinguished award given to civilians, and it is an
5 honor befitting Dr. Westphall's acts of outstanding
6 principle, courage and service in building the Vietnam
7 veterans peace and brotherhood chapel;

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
9 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the members of the New Mexico
10 congressional delegation be requested to introduce
11 legislation to award the congressional gold medal to Dr.
12 Victor Westphall in recognition of his great service to the
13 nation; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
15 transmitted to the members of the New Mexico congressional
16 delegation and to Governor Richardson. _____

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