

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING SUPPORT FOR THE REESTABLISHMENT OF THE HISTORIC
SOUTHWEST REGION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND THE
PRESERVATION OF THE NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT REGIONAL OFFICE
BUILDING IN SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, in 1939, the southwest region of the national
park service was relocated to Santa Fe and was housed in a
newly completed office building constructed by enrollees from
the New Mexico civilian conservation corps and the works
progress administration; and

WHEREAS, following an evaluation of its field operations
in 1995, the national park service reduced the number of its
regional offices, from ten to seven, requiring the
redistribution of the almost four hundred national park
service units among the remaining regions; and

WHEREAS, despite its historic tenure, the southwest
region and its regional office were among those abolished, and
its park units combined with those of the Rocky Mountain
region to its north to form a new region named the
intermountain region with headquarters in Denver, Colorado;
and

WHEREAS, at the time of the 1995 reorganization, the
southwest region was responsible for forty park units in New
Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana and the

northeastern part of Arizona; and

WHEREAS, the intermountain region is now the largest region in the national park service with ninety-two park units in eight states, ranging from Glacier national park in Montana to Big Bend national park in Texas, comprising almost one-fourth of the parks in the entire national park service; and

WHEREAS, the intermountain region is deemed by professionals with extensive national park service backgrounds as being too large to effectively manage the region's parks and the regional office in Denver is too distant from the region's southern parks, resulting in diminished support and service to many of its units, in particular the archaeological and cultural parks of the former southwest region that have required specialized preservation and conservation care; and

WHEREAS, the southwest regional office is the largest secular adobe office building in the United States; is a masterpiece of Spanish-Pueblo revival architecture; is a keystone in the administrative history of the national park service; is an important complement to the history and architecture of Santa Fe; is a national historic landmark; and is listed on the national register of historic places; and

WHEREAS, the abolishment of the southwest regional office has affected the economy of the local community, since most of its former functions have now been transferred to the new intermountain regional office in Denver, threatening the

continued viability of the Santa Fe building; and

WHEREAS, in 1989, the thirty-ninth legislature of the state of New Mexico commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the construction of the historic structure known as the "National Park Service Southwest Regional Office", one of Santa Fe's most notable publicly owned buildings and noted that throughout its existence, it had been the main regional headquarters for the national park service, the nation's leading federal preservation agency responsible for historic preservation; and

WHEREAS, the legislature further recognized the construction of the regional office by enrollees of the New Mexico's group of civilian conservation corps and acknowledged the national park service's praiseworthy and long-standing role in administering the numerous parks and monuments in the state from its traditional southwest regional office, all to the lasting benefit and enrichment of the people of New Mexico and the nation; and

WHEREAS, this praiseworthy function ceased to exist as a result of the reorganization of the national park service in 1995 that abolished the southwest region and regional office without regard to its historic role in the management and preservation of the parks and monuments in New Mexico;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that all possible federal and state

efforts be made to reverse the national park service reorganization of 1995 as it has affected the historic southwest region and its equally historic southwest regional office building in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and restore the regional office to its historic role; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the president of the United States, the secretary of the interior, the director of the national park service, the New Mexico congressional delegation and the governor of New Mexico.