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SENATE MEMORIAL 49

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2011

INTRODUCED BY

Eric G. Griego

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT TO PROPERLY HONOR ALFONSO "AL" OTERO FOR HIS ROLE AS ORIGINATOR AND FOUNDER OF THE PROJECT TO ESTABLISH THE NATIONAL HISPANIC CULTURAL CENTER WITH THE PUBLIC DISPLAY OF A PERMANENT WORK OF ART AT THE CENTER.

WHEREAS, Alfonso "Al" Otero honorably served the New Mexico legislature as a state representative for three terms, from 1983 to 1988; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure in the house of representatives, Al Otero was passionate about and worked diligently toward the creation of a national center celebrating Hispanic culture and art; and

WHEREAS, the idea for a center grew out of Al Otero's personal history, which can be traced back to 1597 when Spanish

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1 conquistador Juan de Onate came to colonize New Mexico; and

2 WHEREAS, prior to the establishment of the center, much
3 vital Hispanic historical and cultural information was stored
4 in libraries and archives and rarely shown to the general
5 public; and

6 WHEREAS, Al Otero had a vision for a Hispanic cultural
7 center that would serve to promote understanding and goodwill
8 between various ethnic cultures; and

9 WHEREAS, his dream involved establishing a venue in which
10 to showcase Hispanic cultural contributions to the great
11 melting pot that is the United States, and locating this
12 cultural center in New Mexico where a rich Hispanic history has
13 been celebrated for generations; and

14 WHEREAS, Alfonso "Al" Otero introduced House Joint
15 Memorial 19 in 1986, during the second session of the thirty-
16 seventh legislature, calling for the office of cultural
17 affairs, the university of New Mexico and the city of
18 Albuquerque to cooperate on a study of the need for a Hispanic
19 cultural center and museum, to be located in the Barelas area
20 of Albuquerque where he grew up; and

21 WHEREAS, this joint memorial passed, setting into motion
22 the plans, funding and organization that, fourteen years later,
23 would become the national Hispanic cultural center, an
24 institution dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the
25 culture of the Spanish-speaking world; and

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1 WHEREAS, today, the national Hispanic cultural center is a
2 mature organization that has staged over twenty art exhibitions
3 and four hundred programs in the visual, performing and
4 literary arts, featuring local, national and international
5 artists; and

6 WHEREAS, the national Hispanic cultural center is one of
7 eight museums managed and supported by the cultural affairs
8 department; and

9 WHEREAS, the center is a world-class institute for
10 Hispanic arts and culture, located in the South Valley of
11 Albuquerque; and

12 WHEREAS, it is wholly appropriate to recognize and honor
13 Alfonso "Al" Otero, without whose vision, dedication and
14 commitment this New Mexico treasure would not exist;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
16 OF NEW MEXICO that the cultural affairs department be requested
17 to properly honor Alfonso "Al" Otero for his role as originator
18 and founder of the project to establish the national Hispanic
19 cultural center with the public display of a permanent work of
20 art at the center; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
22 transmitted to the secretary of cultural affairs, the executive
23 director of the national Hispanic cultural center, the
24 secretary of state and Alfonso "Al" Otero.