

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 48

2 **50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2012**

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 John C. Ryan

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 HONORING THE SISTERS OF LORETTO AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS ON THE
12 OCCASION OF THEIR TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY AND THANKING THEM
13 FOR THEIR TEACHING EFFORTS OVER THE LAST ONE HUNDRED SIXTY
14 YEARS IN NEW MEXICO.

15
16 WHEREAS, the sisters of Loretto at the foot of the cross
17 was founded in Kentucky in 1812, under the name of "Friends of
18 Mary", with the purpose of educating children in that state;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, the order was founded by three women, Mary
21 Rhodes, Ann Havern and Christina Stuart, with the assistance of
22 Father Charles Nerinckx; and

23 WHEREAS, the sisters of Loretto are the first wholly
24 American religious order of women in the United States, founded
25 without foreign affiliation; and

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1 WHEREAS, in 1852, at the urging of Archbishop Jean
2 Baptiste Lamy, six sisters left the Kentucky mother house for
3 Santa Fe, in the New Mexico territory; and

4 WHEREAS, the sisters made the arduous journey by boat up
5 the Mississippi to Independence, Missouri, and across the
6 American great plains by horses and a covered wagon, along the
7 way beset by a cholera epidemic and the other dangers and
8 vicissitudes of travel in the midwest and southwest of the
9 1800s; along the way, the Mother Superior died and another nun
10 was too ill to continue the journey and returned to Kentucky,
11 but the four remaining sisters persevered and arrived in Santa
12 Fe on September 26, 1852; and

13 WHEREAS, shortly after arrival, the sisters began learning
14 Spanish and opened the academy of Our Lady of Light in 1853, a
15 school for girls; and

16 WHEREAS, the sisters of Loretto founded and taught at
17 several schools throughout New Mexico, including Taos, founded
18 in 1863; Mora, 1864; Albuquerque, 1866; West Las Vegas, 1869;
19 Las Cruces, 1870; Bernalillo, 1875; Socorro, 1879; and East Las
20 Vegas, 1912; and

21 WHEREAS, the sisters also taught at other schools,
22 including Tierra Amarilla, Chama, Jemez Springs and Tome; and

23 WHEREAS, when New Mexico became a state in 1912, some of
24 the Loretto schools became the first public schools or were
25 incorporated into the public school system; and

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1 WHEREAS, during the one hundred sixty years the sisters of
2 Loretto at the foot of the cross have been in New Mexico, they
3 have been responsible for educating many generations of New
4 Mexicans and they have contributed greatly to the history and
5 pioneer spirit of the state;

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
7 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the sisters of Loretto at the foot of
8 the cross be congratulated on their two hundredth year jubilee
9 on April 26, 2012 and thanked for their long history of service
10 to New Mexico, particularly to the children; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
12 transmitted to the sisters of Loretto at the foot of the cross.