

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF RAILROADS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW MEXICO AND THE GREAT POTENTIAL THAT RAIL SERVICE PRESENTS FOR FUTURE GROWTH.

WHEREAS, by establishing access to new markets and providing travel opportunities at what, at the time, were phenomenal rates of speed, railroads were critical to building a modern New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is a critical link for two transcontinental freight corridors, the transcontinental line owned by Burlington Northern Santa Fe, or BNSF, and the sunset route run by the Union Pacific; and

WHEREAS, as the home of an international rail port preparing to open at Santa Teresa, New Mexico is poised to grow in importance as a major component of the nation's freight rail infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, in 1878, the Santa Fe railroad entered New Mexico, and the territory was rapidly connected to the mainstream of American commerce, with passenger and freight service to Kansas City, Chicago, San Diego, Los Angeles and Fort Worth following within the next ten years; and

WHEREAS, in 1882, the Santa Fe railroad connected Deming, New Mexico, to Nogales, Arizona, where it connected to the Southern Pacific railroad, creating America's second

transcontinental rail line; and

WHEREAS, the access to eastern and California markets provided by the railroads led directly to a boom in New Mexico's livestock industry, wherein the total size of the state's cattle herd grew from one hundred sixty thousand to nearly one million and the total number of sheep more than doubled to almost five million within twenty years; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of the famed Harvey Houses in the towns along the rail lines and the introduction of premier passenger service from Chicago through New Mexico to Los Angeles in the 1880s and 1890s, including the famed "California Limited", which went from Chicago to Los Angeles in under eighty-four hours, ushered in an era of rail tourism to and from New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, freight and passenger rail service has continued to grow, becoming a mainstay of New Mexico's economy; and

WHEREAS, several sectors of New Mexico's economy, including agriculture, mining, energy utilities and oil and gas production, are heavily dependent on rail services; and

WHEREAS, during periods in which spiking gasoline prices have made traveling by car prohibitive, passenger rail service has been the preferred alternative for commuters; and

WHEREAS, certain population groups, including seniors and veterans, are heavily dependent on transportation

alternatives, and New Mexico's senior population is growing rapidly, with the percentage of the state's senior population expected to double by the year 2030 to over twenty-six percent; and

WHEREAS, railroads and related services employ thousands of New Mexicans; and

WHEREAS, at any given time, hundreds to thousands of construction workers are building a centralized fueling station for the Union Pacific railroad in Dona Ana county; and

WHEREAS, Santa Teresa is poised to become an international rail gateway, providing freight rail access for maquiladora products east into Texas and New Orleans and west to the California coast via the Union Pacific rail line; and

WHEREAS, the BNSF has nearly completed upgrades to its transcontinental line that runs through New Mexico and is the busiest freight rail line in the country; and

WHEREAS, the freight demands for the BNSF's transcontinental line and Union Pacific's sunset route are projected to be over capacity through 2035;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the critical role the railroad industry played in integrating New Mexico into the national marketplace be recognized; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all New Mexicans be encouraged to grasp the potential that the railroad industry

holds for the state's future growth; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the governor, the secretary of transportation, and the editors of the *Las Cruces Sun*, *The Clovis New Journal*, *The Albuquerque Journal*, *The Santa Fe New Mexican* and *The Gallup Independent*.