

HOUSE MEMORIAL 21

53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2017

INTRODUCED BY

Rebecca Dow

A MEMORIAL

REMEMBERING WILLIAM MURRAY RYAN AND HONORING HIS OUTSTANDING
SERVICE TO GRANT COUNTY AND NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, William Murray Ryan, long-time New Mexico
representative, passed away on January 7, 2017 in Silver City;
and

WHEREAS, Representative Ryan was the grandson of W.D.
Murray, a New Mexico Republican who briefly served in both the
New Mexico house of representatives and the New Mexico senate;
and

WHEREAS, Representative Ryan, a native of Grant county,
was born on July 22, 1922 in Central, New Mexico, grew up in
Silver City and graduated from St. Mary's academy, followed by
two years at New Mexico state teacher's college, now known as
western New Mexico university, before receiving an appointment

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1 to the United States military academy at West Point by United
2 States Senator Dennis Chavez; and

3 WHEREAS, shortly after graduating from West Point, Murray
4 married his sweetheart, Marion Buchella, before being stationed
5 in Germany until 1948, and then finally finishing his military
6 service in the state of Washington in 1949; and

7 WHEREAS, upon moving home to Silver City, Representative
8 Ryan combined several business careers, including ownership of
9 a Studebaker dealership, a wholesale liquor distributorship and
10 employment at Kennecott copper corporation, with having five
11 children with Marion and never forgetting what was really
12 important: his wife, his family and his community; and

13 WHEREAS, Representative Ryan first entered politics as a
14 school board member in Silver City, and in 1968, despite the
15 fact that a Republican from that district had not been elected
16 to the New Mexico house of representatives in fifty years,
17 Murray took up the challenge, campaigning incessantly in the
18 mining district and winning the seat; and

19 WHEREAS, Murray began his long and illustrious career in
20 1969, serving district 38, covering Grant, Luna and Sierra
21 counties for fifteen two-year terms, and he was the longest-
22 serving house Republican at the time of his resignation in
23 1998; and

24 WHEREAS, during his first term, Representative Ryan was
25 named to the house taxation and revenue committee, on which he

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1 served until he retired; and

2 WHEREAS, in 1973, Representative Ryan became the state
3 chairman of the Republican party, and although he was a
4 conservative, he declined to support the conservative coalition
5 because he did not believe that coalitions make for good
6 government, and then he demonstrated his independence and his
7 consistent principles by also refusing any offers of
8 chairmanships or vice chairmanships when the "loyalist"
9 Democrats returned to power; and

10 WHEREAS, during his legislative tenure, Representative
11 Ryan secured funding for many community projects, including the
12 acquisition of emergency medical surgical equipment, a senior
13 center in San Lorenzo, a visitors' center in Silver City and
14 community services, particularly those services helping
15 children and disabled adults; and

16 WHEREAS, Murray was a staunch supporter of western New
17 Mexico university, spearheading funding for nursing and
18 occupational therapy programs and renovations to Watts hall,
19 the fine arts center theater and Miller library; and

20 WHEREAS, Representative Ryan was also an active member of
21 many local organizations, including the St. Francis Newman
22 center, Silver City rotary, American legion, elks lodge and
23 Grant county farm bureau; and

24 WHEREAS, in recognition of all his contributions, western
25 New Mexico university bestowed upon Representative Ryan in 1998

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1 an honorary degree of doctor of human letters, and Silver City
2 honored him by dedicating the city's visitors' center in his
3 name; and

4 WHEREAS, Representative Ryan is often remembered by his
5 colleagues as a rare individual and a true gentleman who was
6 always interested in the opinions of others, whether he agreed
7 with them or not; and

8 WHEREAS, Representative Ryan had a long and enduring love
9 for Grant county and devoted his life to the people of
10 southwestern New Mexico, whether it was serving as a little
11 league coach for youngsters from all parts of Silver City or
12 responding with a smile to anyone who called him for help; he
13 could truly be called "Mr. Grant County";

14 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
15 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that Representative
16 William Murray Ryan be remembered and honored for his
17 significant public service contributions to New Mexico; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
19 transmitted to the family of William Murray Ryan – his sons
20 Murray and Kerry and his daughters Kathleen and Robin – and to
21 his friend Janet Sherman.