

A MEMORIAL

HONORING THIRTY YEARS OF SERVICE BY STATE SENATOR JOHN PINTO AND DECLARING FEBRUARY 28, 2007 "SENATOR JOHN PINTO DAY" AT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto was born in 1924 to a family of Navajo shepherders and was raised in Lupton, Arizona, and Gallup, New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto attended a Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding school in Fort Defiance, Arizona, and after many unsuccessful attempts to run away, he finally graduated; and

WHEREAS, he received his bachelor's degree at the age of thirty-nine and a master's degree in elementary education from the University of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served in the United States Marine Corps as a Navajo code talker and, in 2001, received a Congressional Silver Medal of Honor for his service as a code talker; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto worked for twenty-eight years in the Gallup-McKinley county school system and has served as the legislative liaison for the Navajo Nation department of transportation since October 1988; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served as president of the Gallup Indian community center from 1950 through 1970, during

which time he helped to feed the homeless and the less fortunate families of Gallup; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served as president of the Breadsprings Chapter of the Navajo Nation from 1950 to 1954; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served as secretary-treasurer for the Red Rock Chapter of the Navajo Nation from 1954 to 1960; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served as a member of the eastern Navajo tribal council from 1950 to 1960; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto was elected in 1972 to the McKinley county board of commissioners, where he served for four years as a commissioner; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto has served with distinction in the New Mexico Senate since his arrival in 1977, when, as a hitchhiker, he was picked up in a snowstorm in Albuquerque by former fellow freshman Senator Manny Aragon; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto has been a member of the interim legislative Indian Affairs Committee since it was first created in 1989 and has been the chair of the Senate Indian and Cultural Affairs Committee since its creation in 1987; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto has been instrumental in the passage of numerous legislative initiatives, including the designation, in 1987, of "American Indian Day" in New Mexico;

the creation, in 2004, of the first state-cabinet-level Indian affairs department; and the improvement of State Highway 491 between Gallup and Shiprock; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto has worked tirelessly for the improvement of State Highway 491 between Gallup and Shiprock, which the legislature suggested, in 2003, be renamed "Senator John Pinto Highway"; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto annually entertains his colleagues in the senate with his rendition, in Navajo, of the "potato song"; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto is second only to President Pro Tempore Ben D. Altamirano in seniority in the senate; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto is a mentor, gentleman and wise leader whose kind demeanor has earned him the full respect of the senate; and

WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto is known nationwide and in many foreign countries for his involvement in national legislative organizations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it extend its congratulations to Senator John Pinto on his thirty years of service in the New Mexico senate, where he has furthered the causes of his constituents, the Navajo Nation and the people of New Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that February 28, 2007 be

declared "Senator John Pinto Day" at the house of  
representatives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be  
transmitted to Senator John Pinto.