

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 2

2 48TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2008

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO INTRODUCE  
12 LEGISLATION TO AWARD DR. VICTOR WESTPHALL A CONGRESSIONAL GOLD  
13 MEDAL IN RECOGNITION OF HIS SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES.

14  
15 WHEREAS, in order to honor those who fought and died in  
16 the Vietnam war, and to give the survivors a spiritual home,  
17 Dr. Victor Westphall built the Vietnam veterans peace and  
18 brotherhood chapel, which would later become the Vietnam  
19 veterans national memorial state park at Angel Fire; and

20 WHEREAS, in building the Vietnam veterans peace and  
21 brotherhood chapel, Dr. Westphall honored the courage and  
22 sacrifice of his own son, Victor David Westphall, III, who gave  
23 his life in the Vietnam war; and

24 WHEREAS, Dr. Westphall built the Vietnam veterans peace  
25 and brotherhood chapel in 1968, a period in which the nation

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1 was divided over the war being fought by the United States in  
2 Vietnam; and

3 WHEREAS, Americans in 1968 were deeply divided over the  
4 Vietnam war, while the soldiers returning from the Vietnam war  
5 were often shunned and scapegoated as blameworthy for the  
6 United States' policies in southeast Asia; and

7 WHEREAS, in being the first to build a memorial honoring  
8 those who had fallen in the service of their country, Dr.  
9 Westphall bravely made a stand in the name of honor during a  
10 time of great social unrest; and

11 WHEREAS, the congressional gold medal is the nation's most  
12 distinguished award given to civilians, and it is an honor  
13 befitting Dr. Westphall's acts of outstanding principle,  
14 courage and service in building the Vietnam veterans peace and  
15 brotherhood chapel;

16 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE  
17 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the members of the New Mexico  
18 congressional delegation be requested to introduce legislation  
19 to award the congressional gold medal to Dr. Victor Westphall  
20 in recognition of his great service to the nation; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
22 transmitted to the members of the New Mexico congressional  
23 delegation and to Governor Richardson.