

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BEN LUJAN'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO AND WISHING HIM WELL ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, Ben Lujan began his service in the house of representatives in 1975, before more than one-third of the current members of the house were even eligible to vote; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Lujan was elected by his caucus to be majority whip in 1983 and majority floor leader in 1999, before being elected speaker of the house of representatives in 2001, placing him among just a handful of legislators across the country who have served in leadership positions continuously for thirty years; and

WHEREAS, the significantly diverse range of talents and experience that each leadership position demands of its holder has shown Speaker Lujan's ability to understand, learn and successfully master a unique skill to perform each one with a common thread of dedication to the integrity and effectiveness of the house of representatives in serving New Mexicans; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lujan, Majority Whip Lujan, Majority Leader Lujan, Speaker Lujan has committed himself to issues that have a dramatic impact on each New Mexican and allows the citizen legislature to be a clear way to help make daily life better for the people he is serving; and

WHEREAS, during his long service in the house of representatives, Speaker Lujan has fought tirelessly to protect homeowners from suddenly escalating property taxes; to boost the minimum wage for New Mexicans; to attract new businesses with job training programs and tax incentives; to improve New Mexico roads, highways, public buildings and other infrastructure; and to ensure that New Mexico's water supply remains plentiful and clean; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Lujan also found time to pose the official state question, "Red or Green?", although it took him eight years and all of his political skill to forge the consummate compromise and to answer the question with "Christmas"; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Lujan championed legislative reform efforts, including implementation of a new member orientation, which, while accepted as routine today, was not offered to the newly elected Ben Lujan and his peers as more veteran legislators sought to maintain their power, control and authority over the legislative process; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Lujan knows the importance of providing excellent constituent services and has helped countless residents of his northern New Mexican district, as well as other New Mexicans, wade through the bureaucracy of state government; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Lujan repeatedly demonstrates an

unmatched stamina during marathon floor sessions, committee hearings and meetings during the legislative sessions and an unequalled ability to gauge the fate of key legislation, as well as work to bring it to the house in a form that can garner majority support; and

WHEREAS, his understanding of the role in making party leadership successful is reflected in his unfailing loyalty to those who have contributed so significantly to that success and his own appreciation of those who have supported his leadership; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Lujan's tenacity and no-nonsense demeanor in the legislative arena often lead casual observers to mistakenly believe that his legislative efforts are paramount in his life, while the few who know him better understand that his deep affection for Carmen, his wife and life-long partner, their children and their grandchildren have been, are and will forever be foremost in his head and heart;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that constant and continuing gratitude be expressed to Ben Lujan, the man, the friend and the neighbor who has been willing to serve, and to Speaker Ben Lujan, the leader, the inspiration and the embodiment of success in his thirty years of leadership; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO join with the people of New Mexico

in showing support for his continuing efforts and wishing Speaker Ben Lujan the same kind of future success he has shared over the years.