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HOUSE MEMORIAL 10

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2012

INTRODUCED BY

Zachary J. Cook

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT TO CONDUCT A STUDY TO DETERMINE APPROPRIATE PROCEDURES TO ACCOMMODATE THE BURIAL OF VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE FAMILY MEMBERS AT THE FORT STANTON CEMETERY.

WHEREAS, on November 10, 2010, the board of the museum of New Mexico foundation voted to close the Fort Stanton cemetery to future burials of all but deceased merchant marines, spouses of merchant marines or individuals associated with the Fort Stanton hospital prior to its closure in 1954; and

WHEREAS, this decision effectively precludes interment in the cemetery of honorably discharged veterans and their eligible family members; and

WHEREAS, this decision closes the Fort Stanton cemetery to dependents and veterans who have a spouse already interred in

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1 the cemetery and who have a burial plot reserved for future use
2 by the living spouse or veteran; and

3 WHEREAS, out of respect for those veterans already buried
4 at the Fort Stanton cemetery and in consideration of the
5 growing shortage of burial sites for veterans in the state and
6 nation, volunteers who maintain the cemetery have coordinated
7 the burial of veterans and eligible family members with several
8 state agencies for the past several years, with very little
9 cost to the state; and

10 WHEREAS, the Fort Stanton cemetery has been under the
11 authority of a number of state agencies, including the
12 corrections department and the veterans' services department,
13 since the federal government deeded the property to the state
14 in 1953; and

15 WHEREAS, the first military burial at the cemetery was in
16 1918, and veterans and their dependents have continuously been
17 buried in the cemetery since it has been owned by the state of
18 New Mexico; and

19 WHEREAS, the cemetery is included in the national register
20 of historic places; and

21 WHEREAS, the cemetery is currently the responsibility of
22 the state monuments division of the cultural affairs
23 department;

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
25 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the cultural

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1 affairs department be requested to conduct a study to determine
2 appropriate procedures to accommodate the burial of veterans
3 and eligible family members at the Fort Stanton cemetery; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the cultural affairs
5 department consult with the veterans' services department to
6 identify and consider special needs and desires regarding
7 burial of veterans in New Mexico; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study explore the
9 potential for federally assisted expansion of the Fort Stanton
10 cemetery to accommodate burial of populations other than
11 merchant marines, family members of merchant marines and
12 individuals associated with the Fort Stanton hospital prior to
13 its closure in 1954; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the name of the cemetery be
15 officially changed to "Fort Stanton State Veteran's Cemetery";
16 and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
18 transmitted to the secretary of cultural affairs and the
19 secretary of veterans' services.