

1 A MEMORIAL

2 RECOGNIZING THE TRAGEDY OF THE 1980 PRISON RIOT AT THE  
3 PENITENTIARY OF NEW MEXICO, ACKNOWLEDGING BOTH THE INMATES  
4 WHOSE LIVES WERE LOST AND THE CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS WHO WERE  
5 HELD HOSTAGE AND EXPRESSING THE SENATE'S COMMITMENT TO  
6 GREATER PUBLIC SAFETY.

7  
8 WHEREAS, from February 2 to February 4, 1980, the  
9 penitentiary of New Mexico was the site of what remains one  
10 of the most savage and deadly prison riots in this nation's  
11 history; and

12 WHEREAS, a combination of overcrowding, lack of  
13 programs, poor living conditions and unsatisfactory food led  
14 to the riot and the ensuing thirty-six-hour siege of the  
15 prison; and

16 WHEREAS, during those horrific hours, thirty-three  
17 inmates were killed and at least ninety were seriously  
18 injured by fellow inmates, and fourteen corrections officers  
19 were held hostage, assaulted or injured by rioting inmates;  
20 and

21 WHEREAS, since the 1980 New Mexico prison riot, the  
22 corrections department, now under the leadership of  
23 Secretary of Corrections Gregg Marcantel, has worked to  
24 ensure that the combination of conditions that led to the  
25 riot is never created again and that inmates are provided

1 with the proper balance of social control and support and  
2 given the best opportunity possible to successfully  
3 integrate into society, not re-offend and become  
4 contributing taxpayers rather than tax liabilities; and

5 WHEREAS, the legislature recognizes that a properly  
6 functioning corrections system is one that safely and  
7 humanely incarcerates those persons who must be separated  
8 from society and educates, trains and supports the  
9 overwhelming number of inmates who will return to society;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, in recognition that corrections officers are  
12 among the bravest, most dedicated public servants and face  
13 some of the most difficult working conditions, the names of  
14 the corrections officers who were taken hostage during the  
15 1980 prison riot while in service to the people of New  
16 Mexico are hereby recognized: Captain Greg Roybal,  
17 Lieutenant  
18 Jose Anaya, Medical Technician Ross Maez and Corrections  
19 Officers Victor Gallegos, Elton Curry, Juan Bustos,  
20 Michael Hernandez, Ronnie Martinez, Michael Schmitt,  
21 Valentin Martinez, Antonio Vigil, Larry Mendoza,  
22 Edward Ortega and Ramon Gutierrez; and

23 WHEREAS, the corrections department's commitment to  
24 ensuring that the conditions that led to the riot never  
25 exist again is an integral part of the corrections

1 department's philosophy, particularly under the leadership  
2 of Secretary Marcantel, and has manifested itself in  
3 everything from the continuing revitalization of the prison  
4 building, "Old Main", to support for meaningful inmate  
5 programming; and

6 WHEREAS, the corrections department recognizes the  
7 thirty-fifth anniversary of the prison riot and commits to  
8 respecting the past to create a better future by using this  
9 tragedy to educate, inform and involve the public in the  
10 importance of prison accountability, programming and public  
11 safety;

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE  
13 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the tragedy of the 1980 prison riot  
14 at the penitentiary of New Mexico and the men who were  
15 killed, injured and taken hostage during the riot not be  
16 forgotten; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the corrections  
18 department's commitment to increasing public safety through  
19 lower recidivism rates and improved rehabilitation of  
20 inmates be commended; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the senate express its  
22 support for increased public safety; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that continued awareness of the  
24 1980 prison riot and the events leading up to it serve to  
25 strengthen the commitment of government leaders to advocate

1 for the fundamental rights and dignity of all, including  
2 crime victims, correctional professionals and each inmate  
3 assigned to the responsibility of the state; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
5 transmitted to the governor and the corrections  
6 department. \_\_\_\_\_

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