

**A JOINT MEMORIAL**

**REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS TO ASSESS WHETHER  
FORT STANTON MEETS THE CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION AS A NEW  
MEXICO STATE MONUMENT.**

**WHEREAS, in August 1861, Fort Stanton was abandoned to confederate forces sweeping into New Mexico during the early stages of the Civil War; and**

**WHEREAS, in October 1862, five companies of New Mexico volunteers under the command of the legendary mountain man, Christopher "Kit" Carson, took control of the fort for the Union; and**

**WHEREAS, the continued presence of Fort Stanton brought stability to the area and encouraged settlement of Lincoln county; and**

**WHEREAS, Fort Stanton not only made settlement of the area possible, but its dominance in the local economy was a key factor in what came to be known as the Lincoln County War; and**

**WHEREAS, during the 1880s, black soldiers of the 9th and 10th Cavalry were stationed at Fort Stanton and helped control Apache bands under Victorio and Geronimo; and**

**WHEREAS, several legendary figures have been associated with Fort Stanton, including Billy the Kid, who was incarcerated in the fort's guardhouse; Governor Lew Wallace,**

who is reputed to have written parts of his famous novel, *Ben Hur*, while relaxing in the quiet of the isolated fort; and John J. "Black Jack" Pershing, commander of the American expeditionary forces in World War I, who served two tours of duty at the fort in 1887 and 1889; and

WHEREAS, Fort Stanton was officially abandoned in August 1896 upon the conclusion of the Indian wars; and

WHEREAS, Fort Stanton continued to serve a variety of social needs, including a federal tuberculosis hospital, a World War II internee camp for the crew of a German luxury liner that had been sunk off the coast of Cuba in 1939 and a Japanese internee camp in 1942 for Japanese farmers from California; and

WHEREAS, Fort Stanton was transferred to the state of New Mexico in 1953 for use as a state tuberculosis hospital; and

WHEREAS, Fort Stanton has continued to serve the state in a declining series of uses; and

WHEREAS, Fort Stanton was entered into the state register of historic places in 1969 and on the national register of historic places in 1973; and

WHEREAS, the state wishes to make better use of the fort and has entered into a contract to explore the best uses of the fort and its facilities; and

WHEREAS, an assessment of its eligibility as a state

monument would provide the contractor with information on its suitability for this type of use;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the office of cultural affairs be requested to determine whether Fort Stanton meets the criteria for designation as a state monument; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the state cultural affairs officer and to the general services department.