

A JOINT MEMORIAL
RECOGNIZING ELFEGO BACA' S CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEW MEXICO' S
HERITAGE.

WHEREAS, Elfego Baca was a gunfighter, lawman, marshal, attorney, politician, private detective, school superintendent, mayor, county clerk and district attorney; and

WHEREAS, Elfego Baca was most of all a champion for the underdog and a staunch defender of justice; and

WHEREAS, born in the tumultuous year of 1865, Elfego Baca entered this world with a thump, so the story goes, while his mother was jumping for the ball in a baseball game; and

WHEREAS, at the age of nineteen, Elfego Baca, a sheriff's deputy in Socorro, rode one hundred thirty miles to San Francisco Plaza, a small town now called Reserve, to deal with dozens and dozens of cowboys who were making things difficult for the Mexicans in that settlement; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Baca arrested one cowboy and, when other cowboys tried to free the prisoner, he engaged the others in a shootout in which one cowboy was wounded and another killed when that cowboy fell from his horse; and

WHEREAS, following that incident, Baca was forced to hole himself up in a "jacal" and defend himself by shooting through the rafters as some eighty cowboys poured bullets

into the hut and later tried to burn it down; and

WHEREAS, Elfego Baca held off the cowboys for thirty-six hours, killing four men and injuring another eight until he finally surrendered to Deputy Sheriff Frank Rose; and

WHEREAS, during his trial on murder charges, the door of the "jacal", reportedly peppered with four hundred bullet holes, was submitted as evidence, which helped lead to Baca's acquittal; and

WHEREAS, he has been the subject of a Walt Disney television series entitled "The Nine Lives of Elfego Baca", books and many histories of the time period; and

WHEREAS, as a legend in his own lifetime and a folk hero after his death at the age of eighty, Elfego Baca stands as a picturesque character, a man who was more than a gunfighter and ruffian but a man whose eventful life in the time of the settlement of the old west stands as a testament to championing the poor and the Hispanic citizens of the state of New Mexico;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it extend its recognition of Elfego Baca for his dedication to the state of New Mexico and take pride in his part of the history of the old west. _____

=====