

1 SENATE MEMORIAL 119

2 **53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2018**

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 Pete Campos

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9
10 A MEMORIAL

11 HONORING FORTY-TWO YEARS OF SERVICE BY STATE SENATOR JOHN PINTO
12 AND DECLARING FEBRUARY 14, 2018 "SENATOR JOHN PINTO DAY" IN THE
13 SENATE.

14
15 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto was born in 1924 to a family
16 of Navajo shepherders and was raised in Lupton, Arizona, and
17 Gallup, New Mexico; and

18 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto attended a bureau of Indian
19 affairs boarding school in Fort Defiance, Arizona, and after
20 many unsuccessful attempts to run away, he finally graduated;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, he received his bachelor's degree at the age of
23 thirty-nine and a master's degree in elementary education from
24 the university of New Mexico; and

25 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served in the United States

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1 marine corps as a Navajo code talker and, in 2001, received a
2 congressional silver medal of honor for his service as a code
3 talker; and

4 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto worked for twenty-eight years
5 in the Gallup-McKinley county school system and has served as
6 the legislative liaison for the Navajo Nation division of
7 transportation since October 1988; and

8 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served as president of the
9 Gallup Indian community center from 1950 through 1970, during
10 which time he helped to feed the homeless and the less-
11 fortunate families of Gallup; and

12 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served as president of the
13 Breadsprings chapter, also know as the Baahaali chapter, of the
14 Navajo Nation from 1950 to 1954; and

15 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served as secretary-treasurer
16 for the Red Rock chapter of the Navajo Nation from 1954 to
17 1960; and

18 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served as a member of the
19 eastern Navajo tribal council from 1950 to 1960; and

20 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto was elected in 1972 to the
21 McKinley county board of commissioners, where he served for
22 four years as a commissioner; and

23 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto has served with distinction in
24 the New Mexico senate since his arrival in 1977, when, as a
25 hitchhiker, he was picked up in a snowstorm in Albuquerque by

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1 then-fellow freshman senator, Manny Aragon; and

2 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto has been a member of the
3 interim legislative Indian affairs committee since it was first
4 created in 1989 and has been the chair of the senate Indian and
5 cultural affairs committee since its creation in 1987; and

6 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto has been instrumental in the
7 passage of numerous legislative initiatives, including the
8 designation, in 1987, of "American Indian Day" in New Mexico;
9 the creation, in 2004, of the first state cabinet-level Indian
10 affairs department; and the improvement of state highway 491
11 between Gallup and Shiprock; and

12 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto has worked tirelessly for the
13 improvement of state highway 491 between Gallup and Shiprock,
14 which the legislature suggested, in 2003, be renamed "Senator
15 John Pinto Highway"; and

16 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto annually entertains his
17 colleagues in the senate with his rendition, in Navajo, of the
18 "potato song"; and

19 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto is the senior member in the
20 senate; and

21 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto is a mentor, gentleman and
22 wise leader whose kind demeanor has earned him the full respect
23 of the senate; and

24 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto was married to his wife,
25 Joann, for sixty-three years at the time of her passing; and

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