

1 A MEMORIAL

2 RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF AMTRAK, THE NATIONAL RAILROAD  
3 PASSENGER CORPORATION, AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO NEW MEXICO'S  
4 MOBILITY AND ECONOMY; ACKNOWLEDGING THE THREAT TO THE  
5 VIABILITY OF THE SOUTHWEST CHIEF TRAIN; REQUESTING THAT THE  
6 NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION AND THE GOVERNOR SUPPORT  
7 THE CONTINUED OPERATION OF THE SOUTHWEST CHIEF.

8  
9 WHEREAS, Amtrak, the national railroad passenger  
10 corporation and a federally chartered corporation, provides  
11 intercity transportation service to millions of Americans  
12 each year and operates two long-distance routes through New  
13 Mexico; and

14 WHEREAS, Amtrak's southwest chief train runs between  
15 Chicago and Los Angeles, with stops in New Mexico at Raton,  
16 Las Vegas, Lamy, Albuquerque and Gallup; and

17 WHEREAS, the southwest chief serves cities and rural  
18 areas, carries passengers through scenic landscapes not  
19 visible from highways and provides a safe, comfortable and  
20 energy-efficient form of transportation; and

21 WHEREAS, many New Mexico residents who ride the  
22 southwest chief depend on it as the only form of public  
23 transportation between Raton and Albuquerque; and

24 WHEREAS, the southwest chief provides interstate  
25 transportation for New Mexico residents and travelers

1 visiting New Mexico; and

2 WHEREAS, in federal fiscal year 2017, passengers boarded  
3 and disembarked the southwest chief in New Mexico at  
4 Albuquerque, Gallup, Lamy, Las Vegas and Raton more than one  
5 hundred twenty-two thousand times; and

6 WHEREAS, each year, approximately four thousand four  
7 hundred boy scouts who camp at the Philmont scout ranch  
8 travel on the southwest chief, using the Raton station; and

9 WHEREAS, the southwest chief's presence in the region  
10 enhances the state and local economies by attracting tourists  
11 and employing New Mexicans; and

12 WHEREAS, the southwest chief's presence in the region  
13 supports local businesses through the purchase of goods and  
14 services; and

15 WHEREAS, Amtrak spent nine hundred thirty-seven thousand  
16 seven hundred fifty-eight dollars (\$937,758) on goods and  
17 services in New Mexico in federal fiscal year 2017; and

18 WHEREAS, the BNSF railway company owns and leases to  
19 Amtrak most of the line on which the southwest chief carries  
20 passengers in New Mexico; and

21 WHEREAS, many New Mexico counties, including Bernalillo,  
22 Colfax, Mora, San Miguel, Sandoval, Santa Fe, Cibola,  
23 Valencia and McKinley, depend on property tax revenues paid  
24 by the BNSF railway company; and

25 WHEREAS, capital funding is needed to modernize the

1 southwest chief line running from Hutchinson, Kansas, to  
2 Albuquerque so that the line meets required passenger-rail  
3 standards; and

4 WHEREAS, at a 2011 meeting of the southwest chief  
5 coalition, a group of concerned citizens and elected  
6 officials from Colorado, Kansas and New Mexico, BNSF railway  
7 company and Amtrak identified the need for one hundred  
8 million dollars (\$100,000,000) in repairs and capital  
9 improvements in Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico to keep the  
10 southwest chief operational; and

11 WHEREAS, in September 2014, through the transportation  
12 investment generating economic recovery 6 program, the United  
13 States department of transportation awarded Garden City,  
14 Kansas, twelve million five hundred thousand dollars  
15 (\$12,500,000) to begin modernizing the BNSF railway company's  
16 La Junta subdivision used by the southwest chief; and

17 WHEREAS, combined with matching funds, almost twenty-two  
18 million dollars (\$22,000,000) was allocated toward rail  
19 infrastructure upgrades in Kansas and Colorado; and

20 WHEREAS, in 2015, the United States department of  
21 transportation awarded an additional fifteen-million-two  
22 hundred-thousand-dollar (\$15,200,000) grant through the  
23 transportation investment generating economic recovery 7  
24 program to the city of La Junta, Colorado, to continue the  
25 rehabilitation of the southwest chief line; and

1           WHEREAS, combined with matching funds, over twenty-four  
2 million dollars (\$24,000,000) was allocated to upgrades and  
3 repairs in Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico; and

4           WHEREAS, in 2018, Colfax county, New Mexico, was awarded  
5 a transportation investment generating economic recovery 9  
6 grant; and

7           WHEREAS, with matching funds, twenty-five million  
8 dollars (\$25,000,000) is allocated for continued upgrades in  
9 Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico; and

10          WHEREAS, successful completion of the transportation  
11 investment generating economic recovery 9 grant will mean  
12 that seventy-one million dollars (\$71,000,000) of the  
13 original one-hundred-million-dollar (\$100,000,000) estimate  
14 of repairs and infrastructure upgrades will have been spent  
15 on upgrades; and

16          WHEREAS, Amtrak has pledged three million dollars  
17 (\$3,000,000) in matching funds upon the condition that there  
18 be a plan in place to guarantee that the remaining upgrades  
19 and repairs are funded and that the annual maintenance costs  
20 for the portion of the line from the Colorado state line to  
21 Lamy, New Mexico, be funded by a third party; and

22          WHEREAS, these additional requests jeopardize the  
23 successful completion of Colfax county's transportation  
24 investment generating economic recovery 9 grant; and

25          WHEREAS, New Mexico governmental entities, including

1 Colfax, Mora, San Miguel and Santa Fe counties, the city of  
2 Raton, the town of Springer, the villages of Cimarron and  
3 Maxwell and the department of transportation, have pledged  
4 matching funds to support the southwest chief coalition's  
5 efforts;

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
7 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New  
8 Mexico congressional delegation and the governor be called  
9 upon to support the continued viability of the southwest  
10 chief; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
12 transmitted to the members of the New Mexico congressional  
13 delegation, the governor, the state transportation commission,  
14 the legislatures and the governors of Colorado and Kansas, the  
15 chief executive officer of Amtrak, the board of directors of  
16 the national railroad passenger corporation and the federal  
17 railroad administration. \_\_\_\_\_