

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.

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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
13 New 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
13 United States department of transportation awarded Garden
14 City, 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 SENATE OF THE
7 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico congressional
8 delegation and the governor be called upon to support the
9 continued viability of the southwest chief; and

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

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