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SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 82

45TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2002

INTRODUCED BY

Manny M. Aragon

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE INCLUSION IN NEW MEXICO HISTORY COURSES OF THE  
NEW MEXICO ARTILLERY MEN WHO SUFFERED AND DIED ON THE INFAMOUS  
BATAAN DEATH MARCH OF WORLD WAR II.

WHEREAS, thousands of the twelve thousand Americans who  
suffered and died on the Bataan death march were New Mexicans  
serving in the 200th coast artillery and the 515th anti-  
aircraft battalion of the New Mexico national guard; and

WHEREAS, at the beginning of the twenty-first century,  
few New Mexicans recall the heroic efforts of those soldiers  
sixty years past, first fighting and then being forced to  
march fifty-five torturous miles through humid Pacific jungles  
while suffering from malaria, starvation and dehydration; and

WHEREAS, at the end of the infamous death march, the  
surviving Americans and more than sixty thousand Filipinos

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1 were imprisoned in intolerably inhumane conditions for more  
2 than three years before the end of the war; and

3 WHEREAS, this ordeal is honored in the memory of far too  
4 few adult New Mexicans and not at all in the minds of our  
5 school children, who have not been taught of these events; and

6 WHEREAS, in addition to the rich past of our Indian,  
7 Hispanic and frontiersmen ancestors, New Mexico history should  
8 include at least one detailed chapter on the bravery and  
9 fortitude of those who suffered and died defending freedom on  
10 the Pacific island of Bataan, including the infamous Bataan  
11 death march;

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE  
13 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the state department of public  
14 education be requested to develop and require inclusion of a  
15 detailed chapter of the artillerymen of the 200th coast  
16 artillery and the 515th anti-aircraft battalions of the New  
17 Mexico national guard service in the Philippines in 1941 and  
18 1942, including the infamous Bataan death march and the  
19 subsequent years of honorable service while imprisoned, in all  
20 New Mexico public school history courses; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this material be produced  
22 within the next year and reviewed for accuracy by living  
23 veterans of that service; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that school children throughout  
25 New Mexico henceforth participate in ceremonies honoring New

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1 Mexico's veterans, especially those of the Bataan death march,  
2 so that they may absorb part of the history that contributes  
3 to their freedom today.

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