

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO IMPLEMENT OPTIONS SUGGESTED BY THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE THAT ADDRESS THE LOSS OF LANDS BY LAND GRANT COMMUNITIES IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, the New Mexico legislature is actively reviewing laws affecting land grant communities in an effort to address many of the past injustices visited upon these communities by laws insensitive to the spirit and intent of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; and

WHEREAS, as noted in the recently released government accountability office report entitled "Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo: Findings and Possible Options Regarding Longstanding Community Land Grant Claims in New Mexico", the processes used to confirm New Mexico land grants "were inefficient and created hardships for many grantees" and that even after a grant was confirmed "the claims process was burdensome because of the imprecision and cost of having the lands surveyed, a cost the grantees had to bear for a number of years"; and

WHEREAS, the inefficient and burdensome nature of the confirmation processes resulted in many grants losing much, if not all, of their common lands; and

WHEREAS, the government accountability office report identified a range of options that the United State congress

may wish to consider in response to remaining concerns regarding New Mexico community land grants;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico congressional delegation and the United States congress be encouraged to take action in support of the remedies offered by the government accountability office study, such as creating a development trust fund for economic development, land acquisition and educational programs or initiating a program of federal land exchanges to allow for recovery of land by the community land grants; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any program for the recovery of lands be implemented in a manner that will avoid negatively impacting the public lands in the state and Native American religious or ceremonial sites; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the members of the New Mexico congressional delegation.