

1 A MEMORIAL

2 HONORING THIRTY YEARS OF SERVICE BY STATE SENATOR JOHN PINTO  
3 AND DECLARING FEBRUARY 28, 2007 "SENATOR JOHN PINTO DAY" AT  
4 THE SENATE.

5  
6 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto was born in 1924 to a family  
7 of Navajo shepherders and was raised in Lupton, Arizona, and  
8 Gallup, New Mexico; and

9 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto attended a Bureau of Indian  
10 Affairs boarding school in Fort Defiance, Arizona, and after  
11 many unsuccessful attempts to run away, he finally graduated;  
12 and

13 WHEREAS, he received his bachelor's degree at the age of  
14 thirty-nine and a master's degree in elementary education  
15 from the University of New Mexico; and

16 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served in the United States  
17 Marine Corps as a Navajo code talker and, in 2001, received a  
18 Congressional Silver Medal of Honor for his service as a code  
19 talker; and

20 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto worked for twenty-eight  
21 years in the Gallup-McKinley County school system and has  
22 served as the legislative liaison for the Navajo Nation  
23 Department of Transportation since October 1988; and

24 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served as president of the  
25 Gallup Indian Community Center from 1950 through 1970, during

1 which time he helped to feed the homeless and the less  
2 fortunate families of Gallup; and

3 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served as president of the  
4 Breadsprings Chapter of the Navajo Nation from 1950 to 1954;  
5 and

6 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served as  
7 secretary-treasurer for the Red Rock Chapter of the Navajo  
8 Nation from 1954 to 1960; and

9 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto served as a member of the  
10 Eastern Navajo Tribal Council from 1950 to 1960; and

11 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto was elected in 1972 to the  
12 McKinley County Board of Commissioners, where he served for  
13 four years as a commissioner; and

14 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto has served with distinction  
15 in the New Mexico Senate since his arrival in 1977, when, as  
16 a hitchhiker, he was picked up in a snowstorm in Albuquerque  
17 by former fellow freshman Senator Manny Aragon; and

18 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto has been a member of the  
19 interim legislative Indian Affairs Committee since it was  
20 first created in 1989 and has been the chair of the Senate  
21 Indian and Cultural Affairs Committee since its creation in  
22 1987; and

23 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto has been instrumental in the  
24 passage of numerous legislative initiatives, including the  
25 designation, in 1987, of "American Indian Day" in New Mexico;

1 the creation, in 2004, of the first state-cabinet-level  
2 Indian Affairs Department; and the improvement of State  
3 Highway 491 between Gallup and Shiprock; and

4 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto has worked tirelessly for  
5 the improvement of State Highway 491 between Gallup and  
6 Shiprock, which the legislature suggested, in 2003, be  
7 renamed "Senator John Pinto Highway"; and

8 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto annually entertains his  
9 colleagues in the senate with his rendition, in Navajo, of  
10 the "potato song"; and

11 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto is second only to President  
12 Pro Tempore Ben D. Altamirano in seniority in the senate; and

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

16 WHEREAS, Senator John Pinto is known nationwide and in  
17 many foreign countries for his involvement in national  
18 legislative organizations;

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE  
20 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it extend its congratulations to  
21 Senator John Pinto on his thirty years of service in the  
22 New Mexico senate, where he has furthered the causes of his  
23 constituents, the Navajo Nation and the people of New Mexico;  
24 and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that February 28, 2007 be

1 declared "Senator John Pinto Day" at the senate; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be  
3 transmitted to Senator John Pinto. \_\_\_\_\_

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