

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT NEW MEXICO'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION WORK TO  
CREATE A CONGRESSIONAL SUBCOMMITTEE CONCERNING SPANISH AND  
MEXICAN LAND GRANTS.

WHEREAS, New Mexico's land grants are intrinsically  
important to the history and culture of the state; and

WHEREAS, from the seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth  
centuries, the governments of Spain and Mexico made grants of  
land to individuals, groups and towns throughout the southwest  
to promote development in what were then frontier lands; and

WHEREAS, in 1848, at the conclusion of the Mexican-  
American war between Mexico and the United States, the Treaty  
of Peace, Friendship, Limits and Settlement, generally known  
as the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, was ratified; and

WHEREAS, under the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe  
Hidalgo, California and what is now known as the American  
Southwest were ceded to the United States; and

WHEREAS, the ceded territories contained hundreds of the  
land grants given by the Spanish and Mexican governments; and

WHEREAS, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo guaranteed the  
property rights of the former Mexican citizens who now lived  
in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in the second half of the nineteenth century,  
the government of the United States enacted various pieces of

legislation establishing processes to review property claims in the new territories; and

WHEREAS, the processes established differed from state to state and had a history of problematic surveys and outright corruption; and

WHEREAS, congress was remiss in fully securing land grant rights to Mexican citizens under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; and

WHEREAS, there remain issues and controversies surrounding land grants in New Mexico, Texas, California and Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the United States general accounting office published two reports on the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and land grant claims in New Mexico, in September 2001 and in June 2004; and

WHEREAS, among the options the general accounting office recommended congress to consider in the 2004 report was for congress to create a commission or other entity to evaluate and resolve remaining concerns about individual claims or categories of claims and to consider a process for returning land to land grant heirs or for compensating heirs for lost use of their lands;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the state congressional delegation work to support the creation of a

congressional subcommittee that concerns itself with Spanish and Mexican land grants; and

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