

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO DESIGNATE
3 HIGHWAY 76 BETWEEN ESPANOLA AND CHIMAYO AS THE CASIMIRO ROCA
4 MEMORIAL HIGHWAY.

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6 WHEREAS, the Reverend Casimiro Roca, a northern New
7 Mexican legend known for his great faith, his enduring age
8 and his blessing of holy dirt, died last summer just after
9 celebrating his ninety-seventh birthday; and

10 WHEREAS, Father Roca was born in 1918 in a small town
11 outside of Barcelona and came to the United States as a
12 member of the Sons of the Holy Family to start a new life;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, the reverend had worked as a parish priest in
15 Colorado before he was assigned in 1954 to northern New
16 Mexico's Santa Cruz de la Canada parish, which includes the
17 Santuario de Chimayo; and

18 WHEREAS, Father Roca was known affectionately over the
19 years as el curita loco de Chimayo ("the little crazy
20 priest"); and

21 WHEREAS, Father Roca performed many thousands of masses
22 in the last five decades at the Santuario, which he saved
23 from ruin by adding flagstone to the floor in the late 1970s
24 to shore up the foundation; and

25 WHEREAS, the flagstone was needed as a result of too

1 many people scooping up holy dirt from the floor; and

2 WHEREAS, for decades, the holy dirt, whose popularity
3 has so grown that it is mailed out of the state and the
4 country to the ailing, has lured thousands of people from
5 around New Mexico to the Santuario during Easter; and

6 WHEREAS, part of the holy dirt's lore started with
7 Father Roca, who recognized the miraculous dirt's long
8 reputation, then promoted it through the years by blessing
9 it;

10 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
11 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the
12 department of transportation be requested to designate
13 highway 76 from its junction with New Mexico state road 68 in
14 the city of Espanola to its junction with New Mexico state
15 road 503 in the village of Chimayo as the Casimiro Roca
16 memorial highway; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
18 transmitted to the secretary of transportation and the
19 members of the state transportation commission.
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