

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 7

53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2018

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

HONORING THE MEMORY OF ROBERT "BOBBY" UNRUH, A TOW TRUCK DRIVER WHO LOST HIS LIFE WHILE TRYING TO SAVE ANOTHER; RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF NEW MEXICO'S EXPANDED "MOVE OVER" LAW FOR PROTECTING TOWING AND ROADSIDE REPAIR WORKERS.

WHEREAS, Robert "Bobby" Unruh is an example of a person whose death exemplifies the concern and selflessness that guided him in his life; and

WHEREAS, Robert, a veteran tow truck driver employed by All-Rite towing and repair in Tucumcari, died on February 19, 2017 at age thirty-seven; and

WHEREAS, on that day, Robert was dispatched with his service truck to clean up an oil spill on the freeway; and

WHEREAS, another of the company's employees, who had already arrived at the site of the spill, was setting up

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1 equipment on the side of his pulled-over service truck facing
2 traffic; and

3 WHEREAS, once on the scene, Robert began directing
4 oncoming traffic away from his co-worker and a trainee Robert
5 had brought with him; and

6 WHEREAS, most of the passing vehicles were heeding
7 Robert's signals and moving over to the far lane, except for
8 one passing truck; and

9 WHEREAS, recognizing the hazard, Robert cried out a
10 warning, bolted toward his co-worker and shoved him to safety
11 in the service truck's tool box compartment; and

12 WHEREAS, the passing truck then clipped Robert at the hips
13 and thrust him into the air; and

14 WHEREAS, Robert died soon thereafter, leaving behind his
15 fourteen-year-old daughter, Destiny, ten-year-old son, Robert,
16 nine-year-old son, Leland, and mother, Linda Unruh, who is now
17 raising the children; and

18 WHEREAS, in the face of her grief, Linda began promoting
19 the expansion of New Mexico's "move over" law, a measure that
20 had been proposed in the then-occurring 2017 regular session of
21 the legislature; and

22 WHEREAS, the measure, Senate Bill 76, provided that the
23 heightened level of caution that drivers must exercise when
24 passing public safety vehicles stopped on roadsides and
25 displaying flashing lights extend also to recovery or repair

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1 vehicles under those circumstances; and

2 WHEREAS, Linda's efforts helped lead to the enactment of
3 Senate Bill 76; and

4 WHEREAS, many now call the expanded "move over" law,
5 brought about by Senate Bill 76, "Bobby's Law" after Robert
6 "Bobby" Unruh;

7 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
8 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the memory of Robert "Bobby" Unruh, a
9 New Mexican who lost his life while saving that of another, be
10 honored and that condolences be extended to his family and
11 friends; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the expanded "move over" law
13 be recognized as important for public safety and for its
14 potential to save the lives of towing and roadside repair
15 workers like Robert; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
17 transmitted to the family of Robert "Bobby" Unruh.