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SENATE MEMORIAL 17

**55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2022**

INTRODUCED BY

Jeff Steinborn and William P. Soules and Crystal R. Diamond

A MEMORIAL

REMEMBERING AND HONORING ROBERTO V. ESTRADA, A MESILLA VALLEY  
ICON.

WHEREAS, Roberto V. Estrada, a Mesilla valley icon, passed  
away on August 28, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Roberto was born to Apolonio Estrada and Rosa  
Valencia in Mesilla on April 26, 1937; and

WHEREAS, Roberto began pressing corn tortillas at age  
fifteen and graduated from Las Cruces high school in 1957; and

WHEREAS, Roberto started La Bonita Mexican foods in 1968,  
New Mexico foods in 1977 and Roberto's Mexican foods in 1987;  
and

WHEREAS, he created Roberto's coffee club, known as the  
"chunky-Dales", in 1995, with club members assisting him with  
catering duties; and

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1           WHEREAS, Roberto was a generous and caring man who  
2 supported many major community events and helped many families,  
3 whether it was with his time or his food; and

4           WHEREAS, one of Roberto's most popular community events  
5 was cooking his famous enchilada for the whole enchilada  
6 fiesta; and

7           WHEREAS, one of Roberto's favorite pastimes included  
8 hosting the "coffee club" at his restaurant for many years,  
9 where he enjoyed discussions on many subjects and laughed with  
10 his "chunky-Dales" who are now left to mourn his passing; and

11           WHEREAS, Roberto was generous with his donations to assist  
12 the knights of Columbus fund-raising efforts; and

13           WHEREAS, Roberto started the whole enchilada festival,  
14 which gained international attention and was named one of the  
15 strangest food festivals in America by *USA Today* in 2015, which  
16 was the last year of the festival; and

17           WHEREAS, Roberto's world-renowned enchilada, which  
18 measured more than ten feet in diameter, included more than one  
19 thousand pounds of ingredients; and

20           WHEREAS, on October 8, 2000, Roberto was issued a  
21 certificate of verification by the *Guinness Book of World*  
22 *Records* certifying "the largest three-layered flat enchilada";  
23 and

24           WHEREAS, in 2000, Roberto was instrumental in the sister  
25 city exchanges between La Mesilla, New Mexico, and La

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1 Ascension, Chihuahua, Mexico; and

2 WHEREAS, Roberto received many awards and recognition as  
3 an outstanding citizen of Mesilla, an outstanding citizen of  
4 the city of Las Cruces, the southern New Mexico citizen of the  
5 year and the Hispano chamber of commerce outstanding citizen of  
6 the year, and he was named to the Hispano chamber of commerce  
7 hall of fame; and

8 WHEREAS, Roberto was named the Hispanic philanthropist of  
9 the year by the southern New Mexico philanthropist society, and  
10 the knights of Columbus' Roberto G. Gamboa council 9527 awarded  
11 Roberto the "amigo of the year" award on October 26, 2010; and

12 WHEREAS, Roberto was recognized by the United States  
13 senate for his contributions to New Mexico and by the New  
14 Mexico senate for his community involvement and dedication to  
15 the residents of New Mexico; and

16 WHEREAS, Roberto's food was enjoyed and served during New  
17 Mexico legislative sessions, as well as many other events; and

18 WHEREAS, Roberto has been described as kind and respectful  
19 to everyone he met, and empathetic and sympathetic to those  
20 less fortunate and those who were dealing with hardship; and

21 WHEREAS, Roberto loved his community, his employees, his  
22 work and his dog, Brutus, but most of all, he loved his family;  
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Roberto was most proud of his children, Ronnie,  
25 Chris and Yvette; and

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