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SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 12

44TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 1999

INTRODUCED BY

Timothy Z. Jennings

A JOINT MEMORIAL

EXTENDING CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF WENDELL
CHINO, PRESIDENT OF THE MESCALERO APACHE TRIBE.

WHEREAS, President Wendell Chino died November 4, 1998;
and

WHEREAS, he was first elected in 1965 after serving
several terms as chairman of the previous governmental system
and, in all, he led the tribe for more than half a century;
and

WHEREAS, he graduated from Western Theological Seminary
in Michigan in 1951 and began his leadership career as a
minister and was first elected by the tribal council as
chairman in 1953; and

WHEREAS, he oversaw the economic development efforts of
the tribe for the past forty-five years, including the

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1 construction of the Inn of the Mountain Gods, Ski Apache,
2 Casino Apache and many other business efforts by the Mescalero
3 Tribe; and

4 WHEREAS, the unemployment rate on the Mescalero
5 reservation in 1953 was eighty percent, infant death rates
6 were high and there were few houses with running water; and

7 WHEREAS, President Chino fought tirelessly to obtain
8 adequate housing, establish businesses, manage the
9 reservation's resources for tourism and industrial
10 development, improve education and health, defeat antiquated
11 federal and state policies affecting Native Americans and won
12 most of the challenges he undertook; and

13 WHEREAS, on a visit to the state legislature in 1975,
14 President Chino said, "I am here neither for confrontation nor
15 for convenience. I am here for business." He articulated his
16 intent to serve his constituents with unparalleled dedication
17 and honor; and

18 WHEREAS, he was recognized by many throughout the nation
19 as a renowned leader, preeminent in pursuit of Native
20 Americans' political, legal and economic rights and
21 opportunities; and

22 WHEREAS, his political and legal battles won greater
23 sovereignty and opportunities for economic self-reliance of
24 the Mescalero Apache Tribe and many other Native American
25 people as well; and

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