SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 30

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

INTRODUCED BY

Michael S. Sanchez

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO NAME THE PIT IN HONOR OF BOB KING, THE MAN MOST RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS EXISTENCE.

WHEREAS, for many years prior to 1962, university of New Mexico basketball had a losing tradition, attracting very few good players, extremely sparse crowds in the old Johnson gym and virtually no attention outside New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, Bob King was hired in 1962 to coach the dismal program and immediately began turning the university of New Mexico basketball program into first a conference and then a national power; and

WHEREAS, Bob King was the university of New Mexico head basketball coach from 1962 through 1972 and took the Lobos from a team that had a 42-148 record during eight consecutive losing seasons to being western athletic conference champions . 126085.1

twice and playing in three national invitational tournaments and a national collegiate athletic association tournament; and

WHEREAS, his winning basketball team brought national prominence to the university, to Albuquerque and to New Mexico, "making hordes of people east of the Mississippi aware that New Mexico is part of the United States", as former Lobo Mel Daniels said; and

WHEREAS, Bob King was named western athletic conference coach of the year for 1967 and 1968 and is an inductee in the university of New Mexico athletic hall of fame and the Albuquerque sports hall of fame; and

WHEREAS, it was through Bob King's effective and charismatic leadership that Lobo basketball crowds swelled, outstripping the capacity of Johnson gym and requiring the construction of the pit in which over twelve thousand screaming fans watched the Lobos win their first game in December 1966; and

WHEREAS, the pit is one of the premier, if not the premier, basketball arenas in the country and the site of some of the most memorable basketball games in New Mexico's and even the nation's history, including the most exciting national collegiate athletic association final ever in 1983; and

WHEREAS, without the presence of Bob King, it is doubtful that the pit would ever have been built and it is certain that . 126085.1

the basketball program would not be as respected as it is today; and

WHEREAS, it was through Bob King's efforts that Lobo basketball became "Lobomania", the number one sports attraction in New Mexico, and a significant economic boon to the university, the city of Albuquerque and the state; and

WHEREAS, the university basketball program is now so successful that it brings in enough revenue to fund almost all of the other sports programs at the university; and

WHEREAS, it would be fitting and proper that the pit be named after Bob King solely on the basis of his contributions to the university's sports program, but there are even more compelling reasons to bestow this honor; and

WHEREAS, the pit should be named after the man who upheld the highest ideals of institutions of higher learning, who instilled character and discipline in his players, who nurtured the drive for academic success and who did not seek or permit athletic success at the expense of education or ethics; and

WHEREAS, the university can be proud of the inspiration of Coach King and his insistence on adherence to the highest ethical standards in the university sports program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the board of regents of the university of New Mexico be urged to name the pit in honor of . 126085.1

Coach Bob King; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the board of regents of the university of New Mexico.

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FORTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE FIRST SESSION, 1999 February 9, 1999 Mr. President: Your RULES COMMITTEE, to whom has been referred SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 30 has had it under consideration and reports same with recommendation that it DO PASS. Respectfully submitted, Gloria Howes, Co-Chair

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