SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 20-016

BY SENATOR(S) Gonzales and Rodriguez, Bridges, Cooke, Coram, Crowder, Danielson, Donovan, Fenberg, Fields, Foote, Gardner, Ginal, Hansen, Hisey, Holbert, Lee, Lundeen, Moreno, Priola, Rankin, Scott, Smallwood, Sonnenberg, Story, Todd, Williams A., Winter, Woodward, Zenzinger, Garcia;
also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Valdez D., Arndt, Baisley, Benavidez, Bird, Bockenfeld, Buckner, Buentello, Caraveo, Carver, Catlin, Champion, Coleman, Cutter, Esgar, Exum, Froelich, Garnett, Geitner, Gonzales-Gutierrez, Herod, Hooton, Humphrey, Jackson, Jaquez Lewis, Kennedy, Kipp, Kraft-Tharp, Landgraf, Larson, Lontine, McCluskie, McKean, McLachlan, Melton, Michaelson Jenet, Mullica, Neville, Pelton, Ransom, Roberts, Sandridge, Singer, Sirota, Snyder, Soper, Sullivan, Tipper, Titone, Valdez A., Van Winkle, Weissman, Will, Williams D., Wilson, Woodrow, Young, Becker.

CONCERNING THE MAESTAS DESEGREGATION CASE.

WHEREAS, The nation's earliest and longest unheralded victory in the fight against educational segregation took place in the San Luis Valley between 1912 and 1914, largely benefiting the children of Alamosa; and

WHEREAS, In 1914, The "Denver Catholic Register" called the decision in *Francisco Maestas et al. v. George H. Shone et al.* "historic", noting that it "was the first time in the history of America that a court fight was made over an attempt to segregate Mexicans in school." The suit was established from grassroots concern for equal education of Alamosa's children.

WHEREAS, Lying unnoticed from 1914 to 2016, the case dates back to 1912, when Alamosa was still part of Conejos County. The facts of the case stated that 10-year-old Miguel Maestas was forced to walk seven blocks from his home on the north end of Ross Avenue to the "Mexican" school building at the intersection of Ninth and Ross.

WHEREAS, The McKinney directory listed the "Mexican Preparatory School" as being at Ninth and Ross with no telephone number listed; and

WHEREAS, On September 2, 1913, Francisco Maestas went to the Superintendent of Schools and asked to enroll his son. The request was refused, and Maestas was told he had to enroll his son in the "Mexican School", because land for that school was purchased in 1909 to serve only "Mexicans".

WHEREAS, Maestas filed suit and was soon joined by fellow Hispanics and the Catholic Church; and

WHEREAS, Despite the fact that the area had long been part of the United States and the persons involved were born in the United States, distinctions were made between "Mexican" children and "American" children; and

WHEREAS, After a lengthy trial, District Court Judge Charles Holbrook determined that the plaintiffs had made a sufficient case for admittance of the students and issued an order to the school board and superintendent to admit the children to the public school most convenient to their homes; and
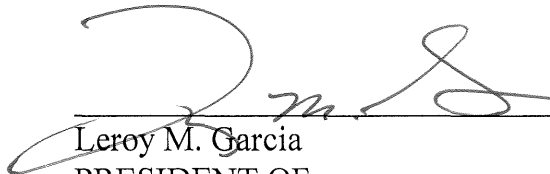
WHEREAS, Holbrook stated that "in the opinion of the court...the only way to destroy this feeling of discontent and bitterness which has recently grown up, is to allow all children so prepared to attend the school nearest them"; now, therefore,
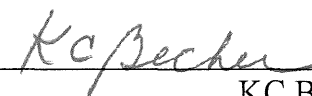
Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-second General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:

That we, the members of the General Assembly, acknowledge the tireless efforts of the Latino community in advocating for the integration of our public schools and improving outcomes for all students in Colorado.
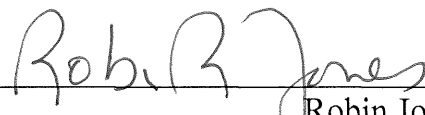
Be It Further Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to the Conejos County Commissioners, the Alamosa County Commissioners, La Sociedad Proteccion Mutua De Trabajadores Unidos

(S.P.M.D.T.U.), the San Luis Valley Bar Association, the Colorado Hispanic Bar Association, the University of Colorado Boulder School of Education, and the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area.

Leroy M. Garcia
PRESIDENT OF
THE SENATE

KC Becker
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES

Cindi L. Markwell
SECRETARY OF
THE SENATE

Robin Jones
CHIEF CLERK OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES