



*The Legislature of the
State of New Mexico*

**FORTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION, 1999**

**SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL I
INTRODUCED BY**

SENATOR RICHARD M. ROMERO

A JOINT MEMORIAL

**REQUESTING THE, LEGISLATURE TO RECOGNIZE APRIL 30,1598, AS THE
OFFICIAL DATE OF THE, FIRST THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION EVER
HELD BETWEEN NATIVE AMERICANS AND EUROPEANS IN WHAT IS
TODAY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

WHEREAS, after exasperating and expensive delays, in the Spring of 1598, Juan de Oñate led the first Colonizing Expedition into the Northernmost reaches of La Nueva España today known as the Southwestern United States of America, and

WHEREAS, Oñate brought with him to the Land that would be known as New Mexico an Expedition of approximately five hundred Colonists, including Men, Women and Children, ten Franciscan Priests and Lay Brothers; and

WHEREAS, now at the threshold of New Mexico, Custom and Law required that the Occasion be marked by Proper Ritual., both Secular and Religious; and

WHEREAS, when they reached the Banks of the Rio Bravo del Norte, today known as the Rio Grande, Juan de Oñate proclaimed that the day had arrived for conducting a Formal Ceremony of Thanksgiving to take possession of the New Land; and

WHEREAS, Oñate directed the construction of a spacious bower to serve as a Chapel; and

WHEREAS, with everyone in attendance, a Solemn High Mass was celebrated; and

WHEREAS after Mass, everyone joined Oñate in a grove of giant trees where, assisted by the Royal Notary Juan Perez de Donís, he read in a firm voice the Official Act of Possession. 'This Document summarized Oñate's Rights, Privileges and Titles; and

WHEREAS, shots were fired in the air while trumpets blared and Families and Servants shouted approval, and Juan de Oñate signed and sealed the Official Act at the same time the Royal Ensign lifted King Philips Royal Banner and waved it aloft; and

WHEREAS the Kingdom of New Mexico came into being, tit midday oil April 30, 1598; and

WHEREAS, the Mansos, the Amicable Local Native Americans who lived along the River who had been helping the Spanish, now joined them for a Thanksgiving Meal of duck, geese, corn and great variety of fish found in the River; and

WHEREAS Captain Villágra who vigilantly documented the events of the day, tells us that the afternoon was given over to celebrating, "with great joy and mirth ";

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that from this day forward the true and accurate History of New Mexico be heralded throughout our State by encouraging the Celebration of April 30 as the First Thanksgiving ever celebrated in what is today the United States of America; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Memorial be transmitted to the Governor.

Signed and Sealed at the Capitol,
the city of Santa Fe.

Walter D. Bradley, President
New Mexico State Senate

Raymond G. Sanchez, Speaker
House of Representatives

Margaret Larragoite, Chief Clerk
New Mexico State Senate

Stephen R. Arias, Chief Clerk
House of Representatives