

Yesterday, the New Mexico delegation introduced a resolution that recognizes Santa Fe's important historical, social and cultural role in New Mexico and the country as the city celebrates its 400th anniversary. Ben introduced the resolution in the House of Representatives, with Reps. Martin Heinrich and Harry Teague as cosponsors. Senators Jeff Bingaman and Tom Udall introduced the same measure in the Senate.

For introducing the resolution, Ben received praise from the Mayor of Santa Fe and the Executive Director of Santa Fe 400th Anniversary Inc.

"I very much appreciate Congressman Luján representing Santa Fe so well as we go into our four hundredth year," said Mayor David Coss of Santa Fe. "This anniversary is a significant event for our city and our country and we are proud to have Congressman Luján promote Santa Fe's important history."

"All of here at the Santa Fe 400th want to thank Representative Lujan for recognizing and commemorating Santa Fe as the Oldest Capital City in the United States," Libby Dover, Executive Director of the Santa Fe 400th Anniversary Inc. "Our rich cultural history remains and will continue to remain an important cornerstone of America."

Full resolution below:

*Whereas, before 1598 the Pueblos of the Rio Grande region of New Mexico inhabited the area now officially known as Santa Fe;*

*Whereas, from the first arrival of Spanish colonists in August of 1598, the Pueblos of the Rio Grande and adjoining regions of New Mexico provided support and sustenance to those colonists, which allowed the colonists to persevere at San Gabriel del Yunque, the first villa and capital of New Mexico located in the pueblo lands of Ohkay Owingeh;*

*Whereas, on March 30, 1609, the Viceroy of New Spain, Luis de Velasco II, upon receiving a royal proclamation from the King of Spain and Captain General of New Mexico, ordered Governor Pedro de Peralta to arrive in New Mexico before the end of 1609 and establish a villa at the site of what is now Santa Fe;*

*Whereas, some 70 years following the establishment of the Villa of Santa Fe, the Pueblos took up arms and forced the inhabitants of the villa to retreat to El Paso de Guadalupe in what was then Mexico;*

*Whereas, in 1692, the Spanish colonists began a return to the villa which, although initially peaceful, resulted in several armed conflicts lasting through 1696;*

*Whereas, following the repopulation of Santa Fe and reinstatement of the Spanish government in New Mexico, the Pueblos and Spanish colonists found ways to engage in mutual cultural interchange;*

*Whereas, over the following years, and despite intermittent disputes, the colonists and the descendants of the colonists formed alliances with the Pueblos and each accommodated the culture of the other, allowing Santa Fe to flourish;*

*Whereas, the peaceful acceptance of each other's cultures continued through the conquest of New Mexico by the United States during the war with Mexico, contributed to the evolution of the cultural heritage of Santa Fe, and resulted in the recognition by the State and Federal governments of the sovereign rights of the Pueblos, including their rights to self-government;*

*Whereas, during 2009 and 2010, Santa Fe will proudly observe the 400th anniversary of its settlement and subsequent founding as a villa and the multicultural heritage of the city with suitable events and observances to commemorate the occasion and to pass on to future generations the heritage of Santa Fe and the surrounding region; and*

*Whereas, it is important that the commemoration provide a foundation for peace, hope and collaboration for Santa Fe and its surrounding communities, and a foundation to move forward as a flagship community within the State of New Mexico: Now, therefore, be it*

*Resolved, That the House of Representatives-*

*(1) recognizes the historical significance of the city of Santa Fe, New Mexico;*

*(2) recognizes the 400th anniversary of the establishment of Santa Fe; and*

*(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe the anniversary with appropriate ceremonies and activities.*