conscience. His death marks the passing of a great public servant, and it reminds us that America could use many more like him today.

NEW MEXICO’S CUARTOCENTENARIO CELEBRATION

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak briefly about a very special anniversary this year in New Mexico, and to share a message from President Clinton to everyone celebrating the state’s Cuartocentenario.

The date July 1, 1998, marks 400 years since a small group of Spanish pioneers ventured north from Mexico, up the Rio Grande Valley and settled in what is now North-Central New Mexico. The settlers, led by Don Juan de Oñate, established a small mission at the confluence of the Rio Chama and the Rio Grande and next to an Indian Pueblo the inhabitants called “Ohkhe”. The Spanish called the mission San Gabriel de los Espanoles.

This year is not just about recognizing these early Spanish settlements, but about celebrating the Hispanic people themselves and the many contributions they have made to the history of this continent and this country over the last 400 years. Indeed, we can point to all aspects of American culture, from literature to sports, and identify many Hispanic individuals who have made significant contributions.

I look forward to celebrating this anniversary and the Hispanic culture throughout this year in New Mexico. I ask that a copy of President Clinton’s message to all who are celebrating this historic occasion be printed in the RECORD.

The message follows:


Warm greetings to everyone celebrating New Mexico’s Cuartocentenario.

In 1598, when Juan de Oñate led a band of soldiers and Franciscan priests to the land we now call New Mexico, few could have foreseen the impact of their expedition. The chain of events that would ultimately lead to statehood for New Mexico in 1912 had few implications anyone in 1598 could have imagined.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 1173.

The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1173) to authorize funds for the construction of highways, for highway safety programs, and for mass transit programs, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill with a modified committee amendment in the nature of a substitute (Amendment No. 1676).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, today we are moving to ratify President Clinton’s Cuartocentenario address.

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This year’s celebration of the 400th anniversary of New Mexico reminds us all of the long and rich history of this beautiful place.

Today’s New Mexicans live with that history. The state’s original peoples, who are represented by 21 pueblos and tribes ranging from Apache to Zuni, would consider four centuries, for their ancestors arrived more than 10,000 years ago. And the remains of earlier civilizations can still be seen in New Mexico.

Our state is a fascinating mixture of old and new, deserts and forests, mountains and valleys, small towns and urban centers, cattle ranches and microprocessor plants, scientists, settlers, and farmers. While taking pride in their colorful past, New Mexicans also look to the future with vision and confidence. With a strong dedication to quality education, clean environment, with thriving agriculture, expanding industry, and a growing, ethnically diverse population, New Mexico is approaching the 21st century with enthusiasm. This milestone anniversary offers a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the extraordinary achievements of New Mexico’s people, remembering their accomplishments in the past and celebrating the promise of the future. Best wishes to all for a memorable celebration.

BILL CLINTON.