

Second Regular Session
Seventy-second General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. R20-0923.01 Bethanie Pack x4829

SJR20-016

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Gonzales and Rodriguez,

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Valdez D.,

Senate Committees

House Committees

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 20-016

101 CONCERNING THE MAESTAS DESEGREGATION CASE.

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

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

11 WHEREAS, Lying unnoticed from 1914 to 2016, the case dates
12 back to 1912, when Alamosa was still part of Conejos County. The facts

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

1 of the case stated that 10-year-old Miguel Maestas was forced to walk
2 seven blocks from his home on the north end of Ross Avenue to the
3 "Mexican" school building at the intersection of Ninth and Ross.

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

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

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

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

18 WHEREAS, After a lengthy trial, District Court Judge Charles
19 Holbrook determined that the plaintiffs had made a sufficient case for
20 admittance of the students and issued an order to the school board and
21 superintendent to admit the children to the public school most convenient
22 to their homes; and

23 WHEREAS, Holbrook stated that "in the opinion of the court...the
24 only way to destroy this feeling of discontent and bitterness which has
25 recently grown up, is to allow all children so prepared to attend the school
26 nearest them"; now, therefore,

27 *Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-second General*
28 *Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives*
29 *concurring herein:*

30 That we, the members of the General Assembly, acknowledge the
31 tireless efforts of the Latino community in advocating for the integration
32 of our public schools and improving outcomes for all students in
33 Colorado.

1 *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent
2 to the Conejos County Commissioners, the Alamosa County
3 Commissioners, La Sociedad Proteccion Mutua De Trabajadores Unidos
4 (S.P.M.D.T.U.), the San Luis Valley Bar Association, the Colorado
5 Hispanic Bar Association, the University of Colorado Boulder School of
6 Education, and the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area.