

The Legislature
of the
State of New Mexico

48th Legislature, 2nd Session

LAWS 2008

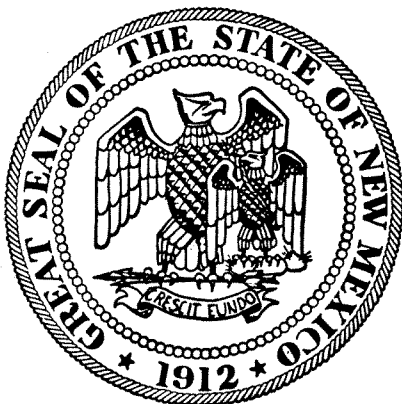
CHAPTER _____

HOUSE MEMORIAL 56

Introduced by

REPRESENTATIVE DANIEL R. FOLEY

AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE NEW MEXICO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



1 A MEMORIAL

2 MARKING THE NINTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DAY CODY UNSER WAS
3 STRICKEN WITH TRANSVERSE MYELITIS AND DECLARING FEBRUARY 5,
4 2008 "CODY UNSER DAY" AT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

5
6 WHEREAS, Cody Unser was stricken suddenly with transverse
7 myelitis, commonly called TM, on February 5, 1999; and

8 WHEREAS, Cody, a basketball-playing sixth-grade girl,
9 became paralyzed from the chest down and has remained so ever
10 since; and

11 WHEREAS, the past nine years have transformed Cody's
12 life, and she has transformed the level of support, research
13 for and understanding of transverse myelitis and other spinal
14 cord diseases and injuries; and

15 WHEREAS, Cody's reaction to learning to live in a
16 wheelchair was to learn to scuba dive and to create a
17 charitable foundation to seek a cure for TM; and

18 WHEREAS, that foundation is called the Cody Unser First
19 Step Foundation, and it continues to build awareness of TM,
20 promote medical cooperation and stimulate research; and

21 WHEREAS, Cody accepted Governor Richardson's request to
22 serve as his national disabilities spokeswoman for his recent
23 presidential bid; and

24 WHEREAS, as part of her promotion of funding for
25 research, Cody has successfully helped the University of New

1 Mexico become a center of excellence, attracting new funding
2 for New Mexico research on spinal cord injuries and diseases;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, the Cody Unser First Step Foundation has formed
5 charitable relationships with the Johns Hopkins Transverse
6 Myelitis Center and its medical consortium affiliates, the
7 Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation, the Kennedy-Krieger
8 Spine Institute, the Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, the
9 Barrow Neurological Institute and the Transverse Myelitis
10 Association and, most recently, New Mexico's Governor's
11 Commission on Disability; and

12 WHEREAS, the foundation has awarded over one hundred
13 thousand dollars (\$100,000) to related research and education
14 endeavors; and

15 WHEREAS, Cody is an ambassador for the Quickie Wheelchair
16 events at Sunrise Medical, for Johns Hopkins' "PROJECT
17 RESTORE" and for many symposia and consortia, and she hosts
18 the "Winners on Wheels" web site; and

19 WHEREAS, Cody was named "One of the 21 coolest girls in
20 America" by *YM Magazine*; and

21 WHEREAS, Cody has won *New Mexico Business Weekly's* "Power
22 Kid" award, the national Prudential "Spirit of the Community"
23 award and the National Philanthropy Day's President's Award,
24 and she was the youngest-ever recipient of the YWCA "Women on
25 the Move" award; and

1 WHEREAS, Cody also won the Grand Prix Americas
2 Foundation's "Special Achievement Award" and now sits on the
3 board of the Paralysis Health Action Plan Task Force in
4 Washington, D.C.; and

5 WHEREAS, in recent years, Cody has worked tirelessly for
6 all quality-of-life programs for people with disabilities,
7 including her own, sponsoring several "Cody's Great Scuba
8 Adventure" programs; and

9 WHEREAS, the scuba program has now expanded, and Cody has
10 enlisted other trainers to train people with other
11 disabilities in scuba diving; and

12 WHEREAS, President Gerald and Betty Ford selected Cody as
13 the recipient of the "People Helping People" award for the
14 "Swim with Mike" program; and

15 WHEREAS, Cody was the first-ever recipient of the "Spinal
16 Cord Injury Project Emerging Leader" award; and

17 WHEREAS, Cody has met with national and international
18 leaders, including President Bush; Prince Andrew; Senators
19 Pete Dominici, Jeff Bingaman, Hillary Clinton and Bill Frist;
20 United States Representatives Heather Wilson and Diane
21 DeGette; federal Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy
22 Thompson; and the late Christopher Reeve and his late wife,
23 Dana, to aid in their promotion of stem cell research; and

24 WHEREAS, Cody has been featured in numerous magazines,
25 bringing to light the realities of living with a disability in

1 the United States today, not only for those with TM but for
2 those with other disabilities as well, and advocating for stem
3 cell research; and

4 WHEREAS, Cody has been featured on *Good Morning America*,
5 *48 Hours* and *CNN* to focus interest on persons with
6 disabilities, and she is now the subject of a documentary
7 entitled "Cody", which is narrated by actor Paul Newman and
8 produced by the city of Santa Fe and Christopher Productions,
9 that reveals Cody in her day-to-day life as a full-time
10 student at Redlands University; and

11 WHEREAS, having found her voice as a political activist
12 early in life, Cody created her own degree program in
13 biopolitics, with the intention of changing health policy from
14 both the medical perspective and the legal perspective;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
16 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that February 5,
17 2008 be declared "Cody Unser Day" at the house of
18 representatives in recognition of the good work of this young
19 woman and her sincere and tireless dedication to the cause of
20 stem cell research; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Cody's indomitable spirit be
22 celebrated as the senate marks the day that this outstanding
23 young woman was stricken with transverse myelitis; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
25 transmitted to the Cody Unser First Step Foundation, the Johns

1 Hopkins Transverse Myelitis Center and its medical consortium
2 and University of New Mexico Carrie Tingley Children's
3 Hospital.

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UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

S/ BEN LUJAN
BEN LUJAN, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

S/ STEPHEN R. ARIAS
STEPHEN R. ARIAS, CHIEF CLERK
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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