

Senate Joint Resolution No. 14—Senators Titus, Mathews, Amodei, Care, Carlton, Coffin, Jacobsen, James, McGinness, Neal, O’Connell, O’Donnell, Porter, Raggio, Rawson, Rhoads, Schneider, Shaffer, Townsend, Washington and Wiener

Joint Sponsors: Assemblymen Manendo, Anderson, Angle, Arberry, Bache, Beers, Berman, Brower, Brown, Buckley, Carpenter, Cegavske, Chowning, Claborn, Collins, de Braga, Dini, Freeman, Gibbons, Giunchigliani, Goldwater, Gustavson, Hettrick, Humke, Koivisto, Lee, Leslie, Marvel, McClain, Mortenson, Neighbors, Nolan, Ocegüera, Ohrenschall, Parks, Parnell, Perkins, Price, Smith, Tiffany, Von Tobel and Williams

FILE NUMBER.....

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION—Urging Congress to dedicate the Old Spanish Trail and the Antonio Armijo Route of the Old Spanish Trail as a National Historic Trail.

WHEREAS, The Old Spanish Trail, which ran between Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Los Angeles, California, was the first non-Native American trail to cross Nevada and remains the least known trail; and

WHEREAS, Traders, couriers and emigrants en route between Santa Fe and Los Angeles followed Indian trails in blazing the Spanish Trail through Clark County; and

WHEREAS, The journey of Antonio Armijo, a trader from New Mexico, through Nevada in 1829 and 1830 linked the historic 1776 routes of the Dominguez-Escalante expedition through Utah and the Garces’ exploration into Southern California and used a portion of the 1826 and 1827 routes of Jedediah Smith to California; and

WHEREAS, Antonio Armijo was the first to link the interior of the Southwest with the California coast successfully, thus opening a commercial trade route, approximately 1,121 miles long, that functioned between 1829 and 1848 as the main artery connecting the interior to the coast which later became known as the Old Spanish Trail and is so named in modern literature; and

WHEREAS, Captain John C. Fremont of the United States Corps of Topographic Engineers was commissioned in 1843 by the War Department to find and map the Oregon Trail, an assignment which he completed successfully; and

WHEREAS, After documenting the Oregon Trail, Captain Fremont, in an effort to expand his government’s knowledge about California, pushed south through Northern Nevada into California; and

WHEREAS, In 1844, Fremont sought the Spanish Trail to guide his party eastward from California and followed the trail through California and Nevada to his point of departure from Utah Lake the previous year; and

WHEREAS, The route of the trail Fremont followed from California, which he named the Spanish Trail in the report of his expedition that he filed with the War Department, led him across Southern Nevada from Stump Spring to the Virgin River via Mountain Springs Pass, Blue Diamond, Las Vegas Springs and the Muddy River; and

WHEREAS, This route was previously pioneered by traders from New Mexico who spoke Spanish, a fact used by Captain Fremont in designating the "Camino de California" or "Camino de Nuevo Mexico" as the Spanish Trail; and

WHEREAS, Fremont's report and map were so important to the plans of the United States for Western expansion that the United States Senate and House of Representatives each printed 10,000 copies of the report and map; and

WHEREAS, Copies of the report and map were available to thousands of emigrants heading westward to California who came to know the route they followed as Fremont's Spanish Trail; and

WHEREAS, The pioneers who used Fremont's route became familiar with the promising potential of Southern Nevada for settlement which led specifically to the founding of Las Vegas or "The Meadows," whose name reflects its importance as a major camp site along the Spanish Trail; and

WHEREAS, The Old Spanish Trail is the foundation of succeeding routes of transport and travel through Southern Nevada including the Mormon Road, portions of the routes of the San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad which succeeded it, and the Arrowhead Trail Highway and its successors U.S. Highway No. 91 and Interstate Highway No. 15; and

WHEREAS, This historic route for travelers facilitated expansion of the boundaries of the United States to include New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Arizona, Nevada and California; and

WHEREAS, The Spanish Trail was preferred by Kit Carson when carrying military dispatches in 1848 to Washington, D.C., which first brought news of gold at Sutter's Fort and resulted in the Gold Rush of 1849; and

WHEREAS, Information about this ancient route of trade and commerce is still limited, and much more can be learned about the Old Spanish Trail; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, JOINTLY, That the members of the Nevada Legislature do hereby urge the Congress of the United States to adopt legislation that dedicates the Old Spanish Trail and the Antonio Armijo Route of the Old Spanish Trail as a National Historic Trail; and be it further

RESOLVED, That such a designation would help ensure the protection and interpretation of the Old Spanish Trail in a more consistent and coordinated manner, would encourage tourists to visit the communities, landscape features and other resources along the trail, would help visitors gain a better understanding of how a journey along the trail might have been more than 100 years ago, and would enhance and promote knowledge concerning the early settlers and explorers who emigrated and led expeditions to the Western United States; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate prepare and transmit a copy of this resolution to the Vice President of the United States as the presiding officer of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and each member of the Nevada Congressional Delegation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon passage.