

**CONCURRENT RESOLUTION FOR A STATUE TO
RECOGNIZE FATHER DOMINGUEZ AND FATHER
ESCALANTE**

2016 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Mark A. Wheatley

Senate Sponsor: Luz Escamilla

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LONG TITLE

General Description:

This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor urges that a statue of Father Francisco Atanasio Dominguez and Father Silvestre Velez de Escalante be erected in the Utah State Capitol to recognize the life and accomplishments of Fathers Dominguez and Escalante and their impact on citizens of Utah and the western United

29 States.

30 **Highlighted Provisions:**

31 This resolution:

32 ▶ urges that a statue of Father Francisco Atanasio Dominguez and Father Silvestre
33 Velez de Escalante be erected in the Utah State Capitol to recognize the
34 extraordinary lives and accomplishments of Fathers Dominguez and Escalante; and

35 ▶ recognizes Father Dominguez's and Father Escalante's accomplishments and impact
36 for good on Utah, its citizens, and citizens of the western United States.

37 **Special Clauses:**

38 None



40 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

41 WHEREAS, Father Francisco Atanasio Dominguez, a native of Mexico, and Father
42 Silvestre Velez de Escalante, born in Spain, were Catholic priests instructed by their Franciscan
43 superiors and the Spanish government in 1776 to search for an overland route between Santa
44 Fe, New Mexico, and Monterey, California;

45 WHEREAS, Fathers Dominguez and Escalante were tasked to evaluate the lives of
46 frontier priests, assess the value of the Santa Fe Archives ravaged by Pueblo Indians in the
47 1680 revolt, and inspect the New Mexico missions;

48 WHEREAS, while Spaniards had only a vague idea of the lands of Utah, the
49 Dominguez-Escalante Expedition confirmed the existence of inhabitants unconverted to
50 Christianity in Utah and established trails that benefitted traders for years to come;

51 WHEREAS, Fathers Dominguez and Escalante kept excellent records about the land,
52 plants, and animal life of Utah, and mapped many features of the Four Corners area;

53 WHEREAS, the Dominguez-Escalante Expedition provided useful ecclesiastical and
54 political information on the territory they explored, including information on the Utah Valley,
55 Spanish Fork, Cedar City, and Lake Powell areas;

56 WHEREAS, the town of Escalante, Utah, and the Escalante River are both named after

57 Father Escalante;

58 WHEREAS, history shows that the Dominguez-Escalante Expedition contacted the Ute
59 Indians living in Utah and preached Christianity to them;

60 WHEREAS, the Dominguez-Escalante Expedition paved the way for explorers and
61 settlers, informing future generations about geological information;

62 WHEREAS, even though no direct link was established between Santa Fe and
63 Monterey, the Dominguez-Escalante Expedition resulted in the establishment of the interior
64 West, which was at last explored and chronicled;

65 WHEREAS, the journals and maps of the Dominguez-Escalante Expedition became
66 invaluable tools to those who would eventually establish the Old Spanish Trail between Santa
67 Fe and Los Angeles in the 1800s;

68 WHEREAS, over 200 years ago, Fathers Dominguez and Escalante proposed Utah
69 Valley as a place where the Spanish could establish settlement;

70 WHEREAS, 50,000 Latinos now reside in and call Utah Valley home;

71 WHEREAS, Utah currently is a growing state with a changing, diverse demographic,
72 including the youth of tomorrow;

73 WHEREAS, children can make the connection that Utah is for all residents of the
74 United States and the rest of the world, not exclusively for residents of Utah, thanks to the
75 Dominguez-Escalante Expedition; and

76 WHEREAS, Utah's first connection to Latinos was through Fathers Dominguez and
77 Escalante:

78 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
79 Governor concurring therein, urges that a statue of Fathers Dominguez and Escalante be
80 erected in the Utah State Capitol in recognition of their extraordinary lives and
81 accomplishments that have bettered the lives of Utahns and many millions of other people
82 throughout the western United States.

83 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge that the
84 Capitol Preservation Board continue to facilitate the process of having the statue funded from

85 private sources and placed in the Utah State Capitol.

86 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Catholic

87 Diocese of Salt Lake City and the Capitol Preservation Board.