

1 **JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIVES**
2 **AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF FATHER**
3 **FRANCISCO ATANASCIO DOMINGUEZ AND**
4 **FATHER SILVESTRE VELEZ DE ESCALANTE**

5 2009 GENERAL SESSION

6 STATE OF UTAH

7 **Chief Sponsor: Mark A. Wheatley**

8 Senate Sponsor: Ross I. Romero

10 **LONG TITLE**

11 **General Description:**

12 This joint resolution of the Legislature honors the lives and accomplishments of Father
13 Francisco Atanascio Dominguez and Father Silvestre Velez de Escalante.

14 **Highlighted Provisions:**

15 This resolution:

16 ▶ honors the extraordinary lives and accomplishments of Father Dominguez and
17 Father Escalante and their impact for good on Utah, its citizens, and the citizens of
18 the West.

19 **Special Clauses:**

20 None

22 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

23 WHEREAS, Father Dominguez, a native of Mexico, and Father Escalante, born in
24 Spain, were Catholic priests instructed by their Franciscan superiors to search for an overland
25 route between Santa Fe, New Mexico and Monterey, California;

26 WHEREAS, Father Dominguez and Father Escalante were tasked with evaluating the
27 lives of frontier priests, assessing the value of the Santa Fe Archives ravaged by Pueblo
28 Indians in the 1680 revolt, and inspecting the New Mexico missions;

29 WHEREAS, while the Spaniards had only a vague idea of the lands of Utah, the

30 Dominguez-Escalante Expedition confirmed the existence of unconverted inhabitants in Utah
31 and established trails which benefitted traders for years to come;

32 WHEREAS, Father Dominguez and Father Escalante kept excellent records regarding
33 the land, plants, and animal life of Utah, and mapped many features of the Four Corners area;

34 WHEREAS, the Dominguez-Escalante Expedition provided useful ecclesiastical and
35 political information on the territory it explored, including information on the Utah Valley,
36 Spanish Fork, Cedar City, and Lake Powell;

37 WHEREAS, the town of Escalante, Utah and the Escalante River derive their names
38 from Father Escalante;

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

41 WHEREAS, even though no direct link was established between Monterey and Santa
42 Fe, Father Dominguez and Father Escalante led an expedition which, at last, penetrated,
43 explored, and chronicled the Interior West; and

44 WHEREAS, the journals and maps of the Dominguez-Escalante Expedition became
45 invaluable tools to those who would follow, opening what would be called 40 years later the
46 Old Spanish Trail between Santa Fe and California:

47 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
48 honors the extraordinary lives of Father Francisco Atanascio Dominguez and Father Silvestre
49 Velez de Escalante and all they did to better the lives of Utahns and millions more throughout
50 the Western United States.

51 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to The Most
52 Reverend Bishop John C. Wester, Bishop of the Catholic Dioceses of Salt Lake City.