

1 **ESCALANTE HERITAGE HOLE-IN-THE-ROCK**

2 **CENTER JOINT RESOLUTION**

3 2010 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Dennis E. Stowell**

6 House Sponsor: Michael E. Noel

7

LONG TITLE

8 **Committee Note:**

9 The Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee
10 recommended this bill.

11 **General Description:**

12 This joint resolution of the Legislature expresses support for the construction of a
13 Heritage Center in Escalante, Utah, to highlight the journey of the San
14 Juan/Hole-in-the-Rock colonizing expedition during the winter of 1879-80 and to
15 preserve the history of the most difficult colonizing expedition in all of the West.

16 **Highlighted Provisions:**

17 This resolution:

18 ▶ expresses support for the Escalante Heritage Center's effort to preserve the history
19 of the Hole-in-the-Rock pioneers, the history of the early explorations of the
20 Escalante Valley, and the settlement of the town Escalante in 1876 through the
21 heroic efforts of members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to
22 follow the call of their leader to colonize and tame a part of the frontier.

23 **Special Clauses:**

24 None

25

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



28 WHEREAS, in 1879, citizens of towns throughout Southern Utah answered the call of
29 John Taylor, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to colonize one of the
30 most remote parts of the Territory of Utah;

31 WHEREAS, taking what they thought would be a shortcut to the San Juan area, they
32 traveled through the frontier town of Escalante, which was settled in 1876, to the Colorado
33 River where they blasted and chiseled out a road in the crack of the canyon wall, descending
34 one thousand feet to the Colorado River;

35 WHEREAS, while this was the most difficult part of the trek, it was only one of many
36 difficulties they experienced before reaching their destination and establishing a settlement at
37 Bluff, Utah;

38 WHEREAS, what they thought would be a six-week journey took six months;

39 WHEREAS, the road these individuals created on their journey became the first road in
40 the Territory of Utah, traveling from west to east, to be funded by the Legislature, though it
41 cost only a few thousand dollars to purchase dynamite to blast through the walls of the
42 Hole-in-the-Rock;

43 WHEREAS, during the winter of 1879-80, 250 men, women, and children, trailing over
44 1,000 head of livestock, blazed a trail through 200 miles of the most rugged terrain in the West;

45 WHEREAS, Elizabeth Decker, a member of the colonizing party described it as ". . .
46 the roughest country you or anybody else ever saw. It's nothing in the world but rocks and
47 holes, hills and hollows";

48 WHEREAS, during their six-month journey, the San Juan colonizers were tempered
49 like fine steel for the formidable task of nurturing relations with the Native Americans, tilling
50 the land, and establishing law and order;

51 WHEREAS, in reaching the San Juan area, the colonizers demonstrated unwavering
52 faith and devotion to duty and set the standard for future generations;

53 WHEREAS, in 2002, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints donated nine
54 acres of land in Escalante to build a Heritage Center, and also donated a water meter, which
55 was critical in allowing the project to move ahead;

56 WHEREAS, in 2007, the Richfield office of the Utah Department of Transportation
57 granted the Escalante Heritage Center \$125,000 to do a feasibility study, which was performed
58 by Landmark Design of Salt Lake City and completed in 2008;

59 WHEREAS, in 2009, the Salt Lake City office of the Utah Department of
60 Transportation granted the Escalante Heritage Center \$500,000 to build the first of four phases
61 of the project;

62 WHEREAS, the Escalante Heritage Center is a nonprofit corporation engaged in raising
63 private and public funds to construct and maintain a center dedicated to preserving the history
64 and heritage of the Hole-in-the-Rock pioneers and the Escalante area;

65 WHEREAS, the Garfield County Commission fully supports this endeavor and is the
66 government sponsor of the project;

67 WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of Escalante fully supports the Escalante
68 Heritage Center in its endeavor to preserve the history and heritage of the area;

69 WHEREAS, the Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area project has declared the
70 building of the Escalante Heritage Center the top project on its priority list;

71 WHEREAS, the Escalante Heritage Center Board has received letters of support from
72 officials of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the offices of both Senators Hatch
73 and Bennett, and the office of Congressman Jim Matheson; and

74 WHEREAS, the Escalante Heritage Center Board has the support of officials of the
75 Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument, who feel that a science center on one side of
76 the town of Escalante and a history center on the other side would represent bookends of
77 learning for everyone visiting the area:

78 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
79 expresses its support for the Escalante Heritage/Hole-in-the-Rock Center Board's efforts to
80 preserve the history of the Hole-in-the-Rock pioneers and the settlement of the Escalante area,
81 and to construct a building in which to tell the story of these historic pioneers.

82 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Escalante
83 Heritage Center Board, the Garfield County Commission, the Mayor and City Council of
84 Escalante City, the Richfield and Salt Lake City offices of the Utah Department of
85 Transportation, Landmark Design, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and to the
86 members of Utah's congressional delegation.

Legislative Review Note
as of 11-19-09 8:17 AM

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel

S.J.R. 1 - Escalante Heritage Hole-In-The-Rock Center Joint Resolution

Fiscal Note

2010 General Session

State of Utah

State Impact

Enactment of this bill will not require additional appropriations.

Individual, Business and/or Local Impact

Enactment of this bill likely will not result in direct, measurable costs and/or benefits for individuals, businesses, or local governments.
