

Second Regular Session  
Seventy-fifth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. M26-0808.02 Jordan Fox x4755

SJM26-002

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SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Simpson,

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Senate Committees

House Committees

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SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 26-002

101 MEMORIALIZING FORMER SENATOR LEWIS H. ENTZ.

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1 WHEREAS, Former Colorado Representative, Senator, veteran,  
2 and farmer Lewis H. Entz departed this life on December 10, 2025, at the  
3 age of 94; and

4 WHEREAS, Lewis Henry Entz was born on September 7, 1931,  
5 in Monte Vista, Colorado, to Peter and Isadora Entz. Growing up on the  
6 family farm, his parents taught him to mind the "three Ps" of pigs, peas,  
7 and potatoes, he told the Colorado Foundation for Water Education for  
8 a 2012 profile; and

9 WHEREAS, Senator Entz served his country as a Marine in the  
10 Korean War from 1951 to 1953; and

11 WHEREAS, In 1952, Senator Entz married his first wife, Lora

*Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.  
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.*

1 Chambers, with whom he had three daughters and a son; and

2 WHEREAS, Upon his return from the service, Senator Entz took  
3 up his family's farming tradition, opening a successful 160-acre potato  
4 farm in Hooper, Colorado. The operation would grow to over 1,000 acres.  
5 He continued working on his farm even while serving in the legislature,  
6 telling the Colorado Foundation for Water Education that he was often at  
7 his "legislative desk for roll call in the morning and back to the farm the  
8 same afternoon"; and

9 WHEREAS, Senator Entz won his first election for public office  
10 in 1969, as an Alamosa County Commissioner, and served on the  
11 Alamosa Board of County Commissioners until 1982. Senator Entz was  
12 the chairperson of the Board for eight years of his tenure; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1983, voters in House District 60 elected Senator  
14 Entz to the first of eight consecutive terms in the Colorado House of  
15 Representatives. Throughout his tenure in the House of Representatives,  
16 in which he represented Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Gunnison, Hinsdale,  
17 Huerfano, Las Animas, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties,  
18 Senator Entz played a key role in issues related to agriculture, local  
19 government, energy, natural resources, and veterans' and military affairs.  
20 Senator Entz chaired the House Local Government committee from 1989  
21 through 1994; the Agriculture, Livestock, and Natural Resources  
22 committee from 1995 through 1998; and the interim Wildlife legislative  
23 committee in 1995; and

24 WHEREAS, After leaving the House of Representatives in 1998,  
25 Senator Entz served on the Colorado Water Conservation Board for two  
26 years, including as the Board's chair in 2000; and

27 WHEREAS, In 2001, a vacancy committee selected Senator Entz  
28 to fill the open District 5 seat in the Colorado State Senate, replacing  
29 Senator Gigi Dennis after she left to join the U.S. Department of  
30 Agriculture. Upon serving out the remainder of Senator Dennis' term, in  
31 which Senator Entz represented Alamosa, Costilla, Conejos, Custer,  
32 Mineral, Huerfano, Las Animas, Pueblo, Rio Grande, and Saguache  
33 counties, Senator Entz defeated two opponents to win reelection in 2002.  
34 Reapportionment in 2002 changed the boundaries of his district to  
35 Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Mineral,  
36 Pitkin, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties. In his more than five years in  
37 the Senate, Senator Entz continued to be involved with issues related to

1 veterans' affairs, agriculture, natural resources, and local government,  
2 among others. He chaired the Senate Agriculture, Natural Resources, and  
3 Energy committee in 2003 and 2004 and was a member of the legislative  
4 Water Legislation Review and legislative Water Resources Review  
5 committees from 2001 through 2005, serving as chair of the legislative  
6 Water Resources Review committee in 2003 and as vice chair in 2004;  
7 and

8 WHEREAS, As a legislator, Senator Entz carried nearly 70 water  
9 bills, including the 2004 bill that created Subdistrict One in the Rio  
10 Grande Water Conservation District, first-of-its-kind legislation that  
11 became a model for the rest of the country. In 2007, the Colorado Water  
12 Congress presented Senator Entz the Wayne Aspinall "Water Leader of  
13 the Year" award, and, in 2012, the Colorado Foundation for Water  
14 Education awarded him the President's Award for lifetime achievement  
15 in water education; and

16 WHEREAS, Senator Entz sponsored House Bill 88-1250, which  
17 created the Colorado Division of Aeronautics. The signing of the bill on  
18 May 24, 1988, took place on the wing of Senator Entz's aircraft.  
19 Additionally, he received the "Lifetime Achievement Award" from the  
20 Colorado Aeronautical Board for his crucial role in its establishment; and

21 WHEREAS, Senator Entz's former colleague in the state  
22 legislature and then U.S. Representative John Salazar paid tribute to  
23 Senator Entz in the U.S. House, saying that Senator Entz's "vast  
24 knowledge of Colorado's complex water laws and the importance of  
25 water to the San Luis Valley was essential, and he worked tirelessly to  
26 protect water," and that "No one served the people of the San Luis Valley  
27 more vigorously than Entz"; and

28 WHEREAS, Adams State College awarded Senator Entz an  
29 honorary doctorate degree in 2007; and

30 WHEREAS, Following the death of Lora Entz in 2014, Senator  
31 Entz married Kathryn "Kitty" Mary Bigley Entz in 2020; and

32 WHEREAS, Senator Entz was active in his community outside of  
33 political office. He was a well-known pilot and aviator in the region, and  
34 he frequented parades across the San Luis Valley, in which he drove his  
35 restored 1943 Ford jeep. Senator Entz participated in the Alamosa  
36 Veterans Day Parade every year, and he displayed his passion for

1 restoring cars and tractors through the Early Iron Festival car show in  
2 Alamosa; and

3 WHEREAS, Current and former legislators remember Senator  
4 Entz as a mentor and friend, including current Senate Minority Leader  
5 Cleave Simpson and former state senators Gigi Dennis and Larry  
6 Crowder. "Such an honorable public servant; I am so proud to have  
7 known him and [worked] with him on important Valley issues," Simpson  
8 told Colorado Politics in December. "I work with folks at the Capitol  
9 today who still recall his legislative prowess and professionalism"; and

10 WHEREAS, Senator Entz was preceded in death by his first wife,  
11 Lora Entz; his parents; nine siblings; and two grandchildren; and

12 WHEREAS, Senator Entz is survived by his wife, Kathryn "Kitty"  
13 Mary Bigley Entz; daughters Cynthia Chapman, Cassandra Curtis, and  
14 Catherine Wright; son Michael A. Entz; sister Vivian Snow; five  
15 grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren; now, therefore,

16 *Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-fifth General Assembly*  
17 *of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:*

18 That, in the death of Senator Lewis H. Entz, the people of the State  
19 of Colorado have lost a devoted public servant and an outstanding citizen,  
20 and that we, the members of the Senate of the Seventy-fifth General  
21 Assembly, pay tribute to Lewis H. Entz for years of dedicated public  
22 service and extend our deep and heartfelt sympathy to the members of the  
23 family.

24 *Be It Further Resolved,* That copies of this Memorial be sent to  
25 Kathryn "Kitty" Mary Bigley Entz, Cynthia Chapman, Cassandra Curtis,  
26 Catherine Wright, and Michael A. Entz.