

Santa Fe County Proclamation

IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE OF JUNIPER BLESSING AND IN AFFIRMATION OF THE DIGNITY, SAFETY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS OF ALL LGBTQIA2S+ PERSONS

Introduced by: Commissioner Lisa Cacari Stone

WHEREAS, Juniper Blessing, age 19, was a beloved resident of Santa Fe, New Mexico, a 2024 graduate of the New Mexico School for the Arts, a gifted singer described by their family as possessing “a transcendent voice,” and a young person of extraordinary talent, intelligence, and compassion who was courageously living their life as a transgender individual; and

WHEREAS, Juniper Blessing was brutally and senselessly murdered on the evening of May 10, 2026, having been fatally stabbed more than 40 times in the laundry room of a student housing complex near the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington, where they had enrolled to study voice and pursue their dreams; and

WHEREAS, Juniper’s family has said that their “loss not only devastates us but diminishes the world,” a profound truth felt by the entire Santa Fe community, the New Mexico School for the Arts community, and all who knew and loved them; and

WHEREAS, Juniper Blessing was born in Princeton, New Jersey, moved to Santa Fe in 2018, and became a cherished member of our community who worked as an usher at the Santa Fe Opera and aspired to a future full of music, philosophy, and purpose; and

WHEREAS, transgender and gender-nonconforming people face disproportionate rates of violence, with advocacy organizations documenting a record high number of fatal attacks in recent years, including 27 known deaths from violence in the United States between November 2024 and November 2025, according to the Human Rights Campaign Foundation; and

WHEREAS, the LGBTQIA2S+ community – encompassing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, Two-Spirit, and all other persons of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions – contributes immeasurably to the cultural, artistic, civic, and social fabric of Santa Fe County; and

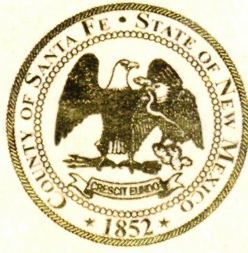
WHEREAS, Santa Fe County is a community founded on the values of mutual respect, inclusion, and the inherent dignity of every person, and it is the solemn duty of this Board of County Commissioners to ensure that those values are reflected in all aspects of County governance and public life; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Fe Human Rights Alliance, the Trans Collective at the University of Washington, and countless community members have stood together in grief, solidarity, and resolve following the tragic death of Juniper Blessing, reminding us that love and justice must prevail over hatred and violence.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED THAT WE, THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF SANTA FE COUNTY HEREBY:

Stand unequivocally with transgender persons and all members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community, mourning the devastating loss of Juniper Blessing, honoring their memory, and declaring that their life mattered – in Santa Fe, in Seattle, and everywhere; and

Will actively and unapologetically defend and uphold the human rights, civil rights, and dignity of every transgender person and every member of the LGBTQIA2S+ community within its jurisdiction,



and will oppose discrimination or policies, at any level of government, that seek to diminish, deny, or endanger those rights; and

Declares a policy of zero tolerance for hate, discrimination, harassment, or violence against any person based on their gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or any other aspect of their identity, and will ensure this policy is reflected in all County services, employment, contracting, programs, and governance; and

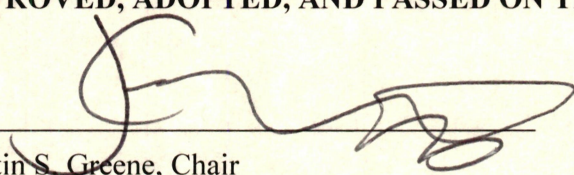
Commits to fostering community safety and belonging for all LGBTQIA2S+ residents, including through continued collaboration with community organizations, law enforcement, and advocacy groups to ensure that hate crimes are investigated, prosecuted, and treated with the full seriousness they demand; and

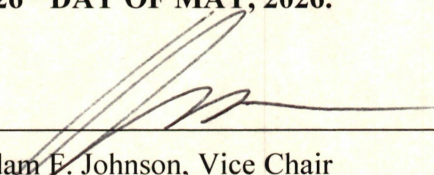
Commits to ensuring that County services, programs, and community initiatives are inclusive, supportive, and accessible to LGBTQIA2S+ individuals, and further commits to building and maintaining intentional partnerships with external providers, organizations, and community-based agencies that offer LGBTQIA2S+ specific services, resources, advocacy, healthcare, housing support, mental health services, youth programming, and culturally competent care; and

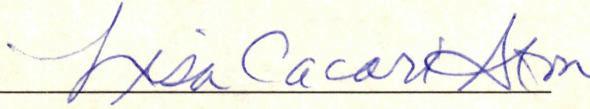
Calls upon the State of New Mexico and all levels of government to strengthen protections for transgender individuals, to fully fund and support hate crime prevention programs, and to ensure that every person – regardless of gender identity or expression – can live, work, study, and exist in safety and freedom; and

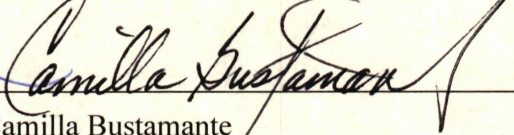
Directs staff to ensure that this Proclamation be transmitted to the family of Juniper Blessing, to the Santa Fe Human Rights Alliance, to the New Mexico School for the Arts, and to all LGBTQIA2S+ community organizations in Santa Fe County as a formal and permanent expression of this Board's solidarity, love, and commitment to justice.

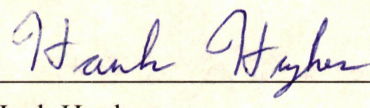
APPROVED, ADOPTED, AND PASSED ON THIS 26th DAY OF MAY, 2026.

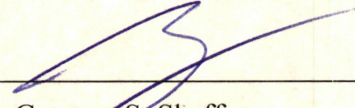

Justin S. Greene, Chair
Commissioner District 1

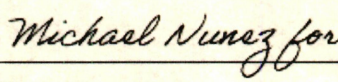

Adam E. Johnson, Vice Chair
Commissioner District 4

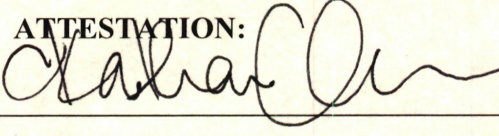

Lisa Cacari Stone
Commissioner District 2


Camilla Bustamante
Commissioner District 3


Hank Hughes
Commissioner District 5


Gregory S. Shaffer
Santa Fe County Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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Santa Fe County Attorney

ATTESTATION:

Katharine E. Clark
Santa Fe County Clerk

