

Second Regular Session
Sixty-ninth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. R14-0997.01 Rebecca Hausmann x2172

HR14-1005

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Garcia,

House Committees

HOUSE RESOLUTION 14-1005

101 CONCERNING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LUDLOW MASSACRE
102 IN SOUTHERN COLORADO.

1 WHEREAS, In the early 1900s, mining was dangerous and
2 difficult work, and Colorado coal miners were at constant risk of
3 explosions, suffocation, and collapsing mine walls; and

4 WHEREAS, Many coal miners lived in company housing in
5 company-owned towns, in which all land, real estate, stores, and
6 amenities were owned by the mine operator and were expressly designed
7 to instill loyalty and quash any dissent among workers; and

8 WHEREAS, While company towns brought some improvements
9 to workers' lives, including larger homes, better medical care, and broader
10 access to education, ownership of the towns afforded the mine operators
11 a great deal of control over all aspects of the workers' lives by imposing
12 curfews, employing armed company guards who did not permit the
13 miners to leave, and evicting anyone who expressed dissatisfaction with
14 the company; and

15 WHEREAS, In 1900, the United Mine Workers of America

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

1 (UMWA) began organizing coal miners in the western states, including
2 Colorado, and despite attempts by mine owners to suppress union activity,
3 secret organizing continued in the years leading up to 1913 when the
4 union demanded, on behalf of the miners, safer working conditions and
5 fair wages; and

6 WHEREAS, After the major coal companies, led by Colorado Fuel
7 and Iron Company (CF&I), rejected the UMWA's demands in September
8 1913, the UMWA went on strike, and the mining companies promptly
9 evicted the miners from their company homes; and

10 WHEREAS, After being evicted, the miners and their families
11 moved into tent villages prepared by the UMWA, where they lived
12 throughout the harsh winter of 1913-14; and

13 WHEREAS, Confrontations frequently occurred between striking
14 miners and working miners, sometimes resulting in deaths; and

15 WHEREAS, CF&I hired the Baldwin-Felts detective agency, a
16 notorious aggressive strike breaker, to protect new workers and harass the
17 strikers; and

18 WHEREAS, Baldwin-Felts adopted the practice of randomly
19 shooting into tents, patrolling the village's perimeter, and spraying bullets
20 from an armored car mounted with a machine gun known as the "Death
21 Special"; and

22 WHEREAS, This tactic drove the strikers to dig pits beneath their
23 tents to better protect their families; and

24 WHEREAS, On April 20, 1914, at 10 a.m., the local militia, who
25 supported the mine operators, surrounded the tent colony and began firing
26 bullets into the tents; and

27 WHEREAS, The bombardment continued for hours, during which
28 the militia also poured kerosene on the tents, setting them ablaze, and
29 pillaged the area; and

30 WHEREAS, By 7 p.m., the camp was destroyed; and

31 WHEREAS, During the course of the melee, 4 women and 11
32 children huddled together in the pits beneath their tents to avoid being

1 shot; the militia captured camp leader Louis Tikas and two other men;
2 and many miners and their families escaped to an outcrop of hills when
3 a passing freight train stopped to provide them cover from the militia's
4 machine guns; and

5 WHEREAS, Later, two of the women and all 11 children who had
6 huddled in their tents were found dead, having suffocated after their tent
7 was set on fire; Louis Tikas and the other two captured men were found
8 fatally shot, their bodies left along the railroad tracks in full view of
9 passing trains; and three company guards and one militiaman were killed
10 in the fighting; and

11 WHEREAS, This criminal episode, now known as the "Ludlow
12 Massacre", triggered national shame and outrage and provided extra
13 urgency to the movement for labor relations reform, which eventually
14 resulted in passage of the National Labor Relations Act; and

15 WHEREAS, The Ludlow tent colony site was designated a
16 National Historic Landmark on January 16, 2009, and a granite
17 monument has been erected at the site in memory of the miners and their
18 families who died that day; now, therefore,

19 *Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Sixty-ninth*
20 *General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

21 (1) That we, the members of the Colorado House of
22 Representatives:

23 (a) Commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Ludlow Massacre
24 and convey our sympathies to the families of the men, women, and
25 children who lost their lives on that fateful day;

26 (b) Recognize the tragic events of the Ludlow Massacre as a
27 pivotal event in American history; and

28 (c) Remember the people who died on that day, including: Elvira
29 Valdez, 3 months; Frank Petrucci, 6 months; Lucy Petrucci, 2 years; Lucy
30 Costa, 4 years; Cloriva Pedregone, 4 years; Joe Petrucci, 4 years; Onafrio
31 Costa, 6 years; Rodgerlo Pedregone, 6 years; Mary Valdez, 7 years;
32 Eulala Valdez, 8 years; Rudolfo Valdez, 9 years; Frank Snyder, 11 years;
33 Primo Larese, 18 years; Frank Rubino, 23 years; Fedelina Costa, 27 years;
34 Louis Tikas, 30 years; Private Alfred Martin, 30 years; Charlie Costa, 31

1 years; Patria Valdez, 37 years; James Fyler, 43 years; and John Bartolotti,
2 45 years.

3 *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Resolution be sent to
4 Dawn DiPrince and Fawn-Amber Montoya, co-chairs of the Ludlow
5 Centennial Commemoration Commission.