

Benigno Cárdenas Hernández

1862–1954

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE 1915–1917; 1919–1921
REPUBLICAN FROM NEW MEXICO

Benigno Hernández was the first Hispanic American from New Mexico elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. He rose through the ranks of local politics in an era of Republican dominance. Elected two years after New Mexico was admitted to the Union in 1912, Hernández benefited from a rich tradition of Territorial Delegates who had tended to their constituents' needs. Hernández's loss of his congressional seat during the Democratic resurgence in the 1916 elections and return to the House after Republican gains in the 1918 midterms reflected national trends.

Benigno Cárdenas (B. C.) Hernández was born in Taos, New Mexico, to Juan J. and Maria M. Hernández, on February 13, 1862. Juan was an adobe mason, and Maria maintained the household. Benigno was the third of 15 children. He attended local schools but had little formal education. Instead, Hernández learned the sheep-ranching and mercantile trades while living in Ojo Caliente, Lumberton, and Tierra Amarilla in Rio Arriba County. He returned to Taos in 1882, working as a clerk until 1888. Hernández lived in a number of communities while building a merchandising business. In 1904 he joined Amador & Company, a firm specializing in sheep, cattle, and merchandising. In 1898 Hernández married Frances Whitlock; the couple had three children: B. C., Jr.; John W.; and Isabel.¹

Hernández served as probate clerk and recorder in Tierra Amarilla from 1900 to 1904 and was then elected to a two-year term as county sheriff. Hernández served as Rio Arriba's treasurer and collector from 1908 to 1912 and as receiver in the state land office from 1912 to 1914 before returning to his business activities. He also served as a delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1912 and in 1916.² One scholar counted Hernández as a member of the "Old Guard," a Republican contingent

that used a "political establishment of considerable skill and permanence ... [in] ... dominant counties of the Rio Grande and Upper Pecos valleys." Many of the Old Guard Republicans were successful entrepreneurs who not only "achieved a measure of independence from politics" but also spoke for "a union of business and similar groups with government." Because they wielded significant influence over political and business affairs at the county level, the Old Guard Republicans had an extraordinary amount of political leverage at the state and national levels.³

Although Hernández's rationale for seeking a seat in the U.S. House in 1914 remains unclear, most likely he hoped to capitalize on the political winds of fortune, which were shifting at the state and national levels.⁴ However, some considered Hernández's nomination to be part and parcel of the New Mexican Republican Party's machine politics.⁵ At least one contemporary observer believed Hernández's run was a party decision based on the strategic placement of New Mexico Republicans in the 1916 elections.⁶

Hernández ran against an incumbent who was a three-term House veteran and the favorite of the New Mexican political establishment. Democrat Harvey Butler Fergusson had served as New Mexico's Territorial Delegate in the 55th Congress (1897–1899) and had then run two unsuccessful campaigns before winning election in 1912 as one of the new state's two U.S. Representatives. During the nomination process, both New Mexico's major newspapers, the Republican *Albuquerque Morning Journal* and the Democratic *Santa Fe New Mexican*, endorsed Fergusson over Hernández. The *New Mexican* commented, "Mr. Hernandez has about as much [chance] of being elected as the proverbial snowball." The Republican nominee "is not widely known throughout the state; his achievements for the state have been nil; he has no special strength with the native people and none with the English-speaking



population,” the editors wrote.⁷ However, a Republican political operative noted that Hernández was a favorite in three counties with large numbers of Hispanic voters; one of these was Santa Fe County, a populous area encompassing the state capital.⁸ Acknowledging the need to increase his profile with voters, Hernández welcomed the statewide campaign. “I do not deny that there are plenty of places in New Mexico where I am not well known,” he told supporters. “I believe that the people of the northern counties know me better than those of the southern counties but I shall visit every county. I think the voters are desirous of seeing the men they are to consider as nominees and for this reason I shall speak all over the state.”⁹

The Republican-leaning editors of the *Albuquerque Morning Journal* insinuated that Hernández’s run was racially motivated. When a reader asked if the paper would “support B. C. Hernandez if he were an Anglo instead of a Spanish-American,” the editors claimed they objected to Hernández because he could not adequately represent New Mexico in Washington, D.C. The newspaper “would welcome the election of a native citizen to either house of congress or to the governorship ... provided his ability was such as to reflect credit on the citizenship of New Mexico,” the editors wrote, but instead “it is understood that he was nominated ... solely because he was a Spanish-American.”¹⁰

The *Albuquerque Morning Journal*’s allegations of Hernández’s financial mismanagement during his term as county treasurer became increasingly rampant as Election Day approached.¹¹ Hernández vigorously defended his reputation and considered suing the paper for libel. “When my term of office ended I turned over to my successor ... the books and records pertaining to the office,” read Hernández’s published rebuttal of the charges. “I stated ... that there might be some errors ... and suggested that a final settlement be deferred until the books could be investigated by the traveling auditor of the state and I could be checked out.” Republican Committee Chairman Charles Ely submitted affidavits from one of the county commissioners to verify Hernández’s rebuttal.¹² By mid-October 1914, the paper had charged that Hernández “failed utterly to discharge

his responsibility and properly bear his trust as treasurer of the county of Rio Arriba,” making his quest for national office “utterly inconceivable.”¹³ Despite the controversy, Hernández continued campaigning across the state against Fergusson and third-party candidates alongside prominent Republicans such as Senator Thomas Catron, who had dominated New Mexico politics since the 1870s as an architect of the Santa Fe Ring.¹⁴ Progressive Party candidate Francis C. Wilson warned voters, “You will give one man a double vote. Senator Catron will vote in the senate and over in the house of representatives” if Hernández is elected. Wilson believed Hernández’s only platform was race. “I have heard Hernandez ... in Taos,” he said, “and in that talk he never showed for the fraction of a second that he knew there is a congress ... or that there are national issues. But from fifteen points of his circle he comes back to: ‘Vote for me; I am Spanish-American.’”¹⁵

Hernández accumulated a majority of the vote (51.3 percent), prevailing against Fergusson, Wilson, and another opponent.¹⁶ Much of his support came from northern counties.¹⁷ “I should not be human if I did not feel elated over my election,” Hernández said. “It was one of the peculiar features of this campaign that I myself did not have a chance to vote for I was campaigning ... and did not get back to Tierra Amarilla to cast my ballot.” Hernández credited his victory to third-party voters and dissatisfied Fergusson supporters who either stayed home or voted for other candidates. He minimized the importance of using race as a campaign issue, saying the tactic “may have worked to a certain extent, but I do not believe that it cut such a big figure as compared with the other causes.”¹⁸

Hernández’s legislative interests included pension relief for his constituents and the resolution of their land claims, natural resource development, and national defense. After taking his seat in the 64th Congress (1915–1917), Hernández served on the Indian Affairs and the Irrigation of Arid Lands Committees. He submitted bills that reflected his constituents’ needs, such as financial relief for individuals, as well as bills for public works projects. Expanding New Mexico’s infrastructure was a special



interest of his. Speaking in support of a bill that would provide federal money for the construction of roads on National Forest lands, Hernández argued, “New Mexico and other western states can not afford ... to survey, construct, and maintain all the roads ... but these communities are perfectly willing to meet the Federal Government half way and do their share of road building aided by the Federal Government, as proposed by this bill.”¹⁹ Hernández also dealt with social issues such as women’s suffrage. Suffragists in New Mexico challenged Senator Catron and Hernández to support the cause, but Catron resolutely opposed it, while Hernández remained noncommittal.²⁰

Much of Hernández’s legislative agenda focused on security and national defense. The ongoing civil wars in Mexico due to the political upheaval from the 1910 revolution were an immediate security concern in New Mexico. By 1915 the Woodrow Wilson administration, in concert with other nations, recognized the regime of Venustiano Carranza, a regional governor who became president and pledged to uphold constitutionalism, liberal capitalism, and international law.²¹ One of Carranza’s regional rivals was Francisco (Pancho) Villa, a bandit-turned-charismatic revolutionary who led the Division del Norte, a force that possessed artillery, troop trains, and limited air support. On March 9, 1916, Villa led 1,500 men from Mexico into Columbus, New Mexico; killed at least 17 U.S. citizens; and destroyed property before retreating. Villa’s forces also killed 18 U.S. engineers in Mexico.²² The American public demanded a quick, decisive reprisal. Representative Frank Mondell of Wyoming criticized the Wilson administration, charging that it “first interfered with the domestic affairs of the Republic south of us, and then continued its meddlesome interference until there was not a faction ... that did not hate the American name.”²³ The day after the attack, Hernández condemned the escalating violence on the Mexico-New Mexico border. He said, “The people of New Mexico on the border have been suffering like the people of Texas, like the people of Arizona, and if the [Venustiano] Carranza regime to-day is unable to take care of conditions down

there.... The people of New Mexico have a militia now, and undoubtedly will assist the national authorities in controlling and trying to apprehend the assassins who have committed these latest outrages.” Hernández’s colleagues applauded his speech.²⁴

One of the Wilson administration’s greatest concerns was tempering the U.S. response to Villa’s raid. Faced with mounting public pressure and a restless Congress that could push him into a full-scale invasion in an election year, President Wilson decided on a limited engagement; he ordered 12,000 troops, led by General John J. Pershing, to enter Mexico to arrest Villa. Carranza, who sent his own force into northern Mexico to arrest Villa, warned Wilson that such an invasion could lead to full-scale war. Pershing’s forces, dubbed the “Punitive Expedition,” pushed 350 miles into Mexico but did not find Villa because of the hostile terrain, the lack of cooperation from local citizens, and Villa’s skill in evasion. U.S. forces fought with some of Carranza’s men on June 21; nine U.S. soldiers and 30 Mexican soldiers were killed, and a larger number were wounded. To resolve the crisis, Wilson and Carranza formed a joint commission to resolve the incident and drafted agreements about border procedures. Villa did not invade the United States again, and the two nations avoided a full-scale conflict.²⁵

Hernández advocated limited support for U.S. involvement in World War I during his first term. In 1915 he supported a resolution sponsored by Jeff McLemore of Texas warning Americans not to sail on vessels of belligerent nations such as Great Britain, France, or Germany so as to avoid capture or death. In 1916 Hernández supported diplomatic engagement with Germany, stating, “We should first exhaust our diplomacy and warn our people to avoid danger, and when we have done all in our power toward preventing war ... and our diplomacies are exhausted, we will then be unflinching in our solemn duty.”²⁶ Along with diplomacy, he supported the National Defense Act of 1916 (H.R. 12766), which reorganized the U.S. Army into an active duty force, a reserve, and the National Guard. The act also increased the size of the U.S. Army and spurred the creation of a modern munitions-production infrastructure.²⁷

At the start of his 1916 re-election campaign, Hernández announced his intention to win a second term, declaring, “I have served to the best of my ability as a representative in congress, and I would like to go back for another term.” Citing his experience as an incumbent, he said, “I think I could render better service [to the state in] another term, because I have learned how the work is done.” Throughout the campaign, he promoted the Republican Party platform, which consisted of strict neutrality regarding the conflict in Europe along with a simultaneous increase in the nation’s defense. Hernández also campaigned against the Wilson administration’s policies of dialogue and limited engagement with Mexico, which he called “a long series of blunders.” “I believe that Mexico policies will do more than any other one thing to bring about the defeat of Mr. Wilson,” Hernández said.²⁸ His opponent was William Walton, a prominent lawyer who was serving in the state senate and had also represented Grant County in the 34th Legislative Assembly (1901–1902).²⁹ The *Albuquerque Morning Journal* again refused to endorse Hernández. The editors resurrected the unsubstantiated charges of Hernández’s negligence as treasurer of Rio Arriba County, concluding, “Mr. Hernandez should not have been elected [in 1914] ... [and] should not be re-elected this year” because of his lackluster record in Congress.³⁰

At the national level, the Republican Party’s presidential nominee, Supreme Court Justice Charles Evans Hughes, could not unify Republican progressives and Old Guard conservatives. Hughes’s platform was difficult to distinguish from Wilson’s neutrality policies, partially because he could not afford to alienate isolationist Midwesterners, many of whom were of German descent, with pro-war rhetoric.³¹ Hughes’s ambiguous national platform, which lacked a compelling counter-argument to neutrality, complicated the efforts of many national Republican candidates to distinguish themselves from Democratic opponents. Along with fellow Republicans Frank A. Hubbell, a candidate for the U.S. Senate, and future U.S. Senator Holm O. Bursum, then seeking the governorship, Hernández campaigned around the state.³²

Hernández lost re-election to Walton in a close race (49 to 48 percent), partly because of the success of President Wilson’s “peace” campaign message and legislative successes supported by both Republicans and progressives.³³ Wilson not only won re-election, but he also brought a number of Democrats into Congress on his coattails. Republicans suffered because of voters’ tepid enthusiasm for Hughes and the split between progressives and conservatives within the party.³⁴ Within New Mexico, the press suggested that Hernández’s inattentiveness to constituent needs and his focus on national issues cost him at the polls. In an election postmortem, the *Albuquerque Morning Journal* acknowledged, “Few people in the state ... believed that B. C. Hernandez would be beaten for Congress,” but the newspaper reported that in his home county of Rio Arriba, Hernández “failed to receive more than about one-half the plurality” he had won in 1914. “Hernandez paid little attention to anything except national politics,” observed the editor, noting that the state’s representatives in Washington should have been focused on key issues such as securing federal lands. “He made a few speeches on matters pertaining to his state, but they were merely perfunctory ... and got him nowhere.”³⁵

After his electoral loss, Hernández threw himself into supporting New Mexico’s mobilization efforts for World War I. He served on the executive committee of the New Mexico council of defense. As one of the most prominent *nuevomexicano* council members, Hernández wrote dispatches about the draft, the war, and New Mexican participation in the war in Spanish. He also opposed the Industrial Workers of the World and supported the Wilson administration’s repression of labor during the war.³⁶

In 1918 Hernández’s electoral hopes were revived when Walton left the House to pursue a Senate run against Albert Fall in 1918. Hernández announced his candidacy and ran on a platform that stressed his experience and success in Washington. He highlighted his ability to secure more than \$1 million in federal money for New Mexican roads and reminded critics who accused him of pacifism that his “only boy ... voluntarily enlisted and [had] gone to the front.” Hernández “pledged that he

would vote for all measures necessary to win the war.”³⁷ The once-hostile *Santa Fe New Mexican* now endorsed Hernández, noting that he would do what was necessary to help prosecute the war.³⁸ To underscore Hernández’s fitness on military matters, Julius Kahn of California, the well-respected chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee, gave him a ringing endorsement. Kahn burnished Hernández’s credentials in military preparedness by recalling his support for various bills: “While a member of the house ... he was independent and fearless in his votes. I know [that] especially with reference to the legislation of the ... national defense act.” Kahn recalled, “Hernández repeatedly voted while the house was in a committee of the whole, considering the measure for an expansion of our military establishment, and when you consider that that law was passed only seven months before Germany served her notice upon us that she would destroy our ships ... it shows that Mr. Hernández had vision and was looking into the future when he cast those votes.”³⁹ Hernández’s principal challenger was Democrat G. A. Richardson, a judge from the Pecos Valley. In the general election, Hernández prevailed with 51 percent of the vote to Richardson’s 48 percent; a third-party candidate, W. B. Dillon, won the small remainder of the votes.⁴⁰

When he claimed his seat in the 66th Congress (1919–1921), Hernández served on the Indian Affairs, Irrigation of Arid Lands, and Public Lands Committees.⁴¹ Hernández submitted bills for pension and estate relief, public works projects, and legislation for veterans.⁴² In a floor speech on Memorial Day 1919, Hernández paid tribute to New Mexico’s veterans of the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, and the First World War. Hernández noted that during World War I, about “5,000 men ... voluntarily enlisted in all branches of the Army and Navy,” with “15,000 or more ... drafted under the provisions of the selective service law.” Unfortunately, “eleven hundred casualties marked the price paid by sons of our State in the World War.” He paid special notice to the families of fallen servicemen, noting, “When we are paying tribute to our heroes, let us not forget the mothers, the widows, and their orphans” in the aftermath of the conflict.⁴³ Hernández

also supported H.R. 487, a bill to provide employment and homes for military and naval veterans by developing state or federally owned land. Touting the support of the American Legion of New Mexico, which comprised 3,000 veterans, Hernández told the House such an endorsement “indicates that the people of New Mexico are intensely interested in this legislation, and they are willing to lend their aid by giving up part of the lands that were ceded to that State by the Federal Government, and ... the funds derived by the sale and rentals of other lands ceded by the Federal Government” prior to New Mexico’s statehood. Introduced by House Majority Leader Frank Mondell of Wyoming, the bill was submitted to the Committee on Public Lands, where it eventually died.⁴⁴

One of Hernández’s lasting legislative successes was the passage of H.R. 14669, a bill to consolidate forest lands in the Carson National Forest, near Taos, New Mexico, whose enactment (P.L. 66-382) authorized the Secretary of the Interior to exchange land with private landowners for the benefit of the national park. Hernández submitted the bill at the end of the congressional session. After a small debate about the equity of value between private and federal land, the bill passed the House and the Senate and was signed by the President during the waning hours of the 66th Congress.⁴⁵

Hernández declined to serve in Congress for a third term and returned to New Mexico. President Warren Harding appointed him collector of internal revenue and he remained in that office through the 1920s, eventually serving as director of internal revenue. Hernández resigned in 1933 as Democrats regained power in New Mexico. He remained active in New Mexican politics until he moved to California in 1946. He died in Los Angeles on October 18, 1954.⁴⁶

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, “Benigno Cárdenas Hernández,” <http://bioguide.congress.gov>.



NOTES

- 1 *Ninth Census of the United States, 1870: Population Schedule*, Red Willow Indian Reservation of Taos Juan Santisteben, Taos, New Mexico Territory, Roll M593_896, page 684B, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., <http://search.ancestrylibrary.com> (accessed 13 January 2011). Charles F. Coan, "Benigno Cardenas Hernandez" in *A History of New Mexico*, vol. 2 (Chicago and New York: The American Historical Society, 1925): 120–121; "Benigno 'B. C.' Hernandez" in Maurilio Vigil, *Los Patronos: Profiles of Hispanic Political Leaders in New Mexico History* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1980): 143–145; "Former State Congressman Dies at 92," 19 October 1954, (Santa Fe) *The New Mexican*: 1. According to this obituary, Hernández's "only formal schooling consisted of three months of class work one winter under a traveling school teacher." Although the census form notes that Juan Hernández worked as an adobe mason in 1870, Coan states that he "spent his life as a rancher and stock raiser" and died with the title "don." Coan also states that Benigno "acquired his early education in private and public schools in Taos."
- 2 Coan, "Benigno Cárdenas Hernández"; *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, "Benigno Cárdenas Hernández," <http://bioguide.congress.gov>.
- 3 Jack Holmes, *Politics in New Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1967): 148, 176–177. Holmes notes that within 11 counties, the Old Guard members were "one or more individuals of political energy and acumen who could direct the local work necessary to win elections, act in concert with other politicians, and work successfully at the higher level of strategy and abstraction required by state and national politics."
- 4 Calvin A. Roberts, "H. B. Fergusson, 1818–1915: New Mexico Spokesman for Political Reform," *New Mexico Historical Review* 57 (July 1982): 251–252. Roberts argues that "partisan politics ... helped oust Fergusson in favor of Republican Ben C. Hernandez. Despite an appeal by [President Woodrow] Wilson to the voters of New Mexico that Fergusson be returned to his seat, age and ill health robbed [Fergusson] of his zest and vigor of campaigning." Hernández's run could also be seen as part of the "native-son" movement fostered by Octaviano A. Larrazolo in 1911 to encourage Hispanic politicians to seek public office in New Mexico. See Carolyn Zeleny, *Relations between the Spanish-Americans and Anglo-Americans in New Mexico* (New York: Arno Press, 1974; reprint of 1966 edition): 220–225.
- 5 "As to B. C. Hernandez," 31 August 1914, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 4. For Hernández's nomination as the political machine's cynical choice, see "A Moral Issue," 15 October 1914, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 6.
- 6 "The Optics Explanation," 16 September 1914, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 6. The editors insisted that "wound up with the candidacy of Mr. Hernandez is the candidacy of Senator [Thomas B.] Catron to succeed himself two years from now. He [Catron] forced the nomination of Hernandez because he did not want a native [that is, Hispanic] candidate in the field for the senatorship in 1916." For more information about the "gentlemen's agreement" to wage only Anglo versus Anglo and Hispanic versus Hispanic political campaigns, see Zeleny, *Relations between the Spanish-Americans and Anglo-Americans in New Mexico*: 229–230.
- 7 "Our Best Wishes," 25 August 1914, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 2.
- 8 "Santa Fe County for Hernandez for Congress," 13 August 1914, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 6. The operative stated, "With Hernandez we could beat Fergusson."
- 9 "Candidates Are Preparing for a Whirlwind Tour of 26 Counties," 29 August 1914, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 4.
- 10 "As to B. C. Hernandez."
- 11 In one article, the editors charged that Hernández had "marked as paid over \$800 in taxes when they were not paid ... also that he marked as paid some \$360 in merchandise licenses alleged not to have been paid." However, the newspaper also alleged "that Hernández made good the amounts when demand was made by the traveling auditor." See "Owing to Scandal Made Public in Connection with Official Acts Hernandez May Resign from Ticket," 13 September 1914, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*; "Hernandez Will Take Steps to Protect Himself in Court's Intimation of Chairman Ely," 14 September 1914, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 1.
- 12 "Chairman Ralph C. Ely's Comprehensive Statement in Vindication of Personal Honesty of Hernandez," 24 September 1914, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 1, 6.
- 13 "More Evidence of Carelessness by Hernandez," 14 October 1914, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 3; "Mr. Hernandez Was Also Very Careless in the Year A.D. 1909," 13 October 1914, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 1; "Impossible," 14 October 1914, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 4. Governor William McDonald gave the press a report alleging that in 1909, Hernández fell \$2,447 short in his accounts and did not realize his mistake until an auditor pointed it out to him.
- 14 "Catron Stumping New Mexico with B. C. Hernandez," 21 September 1914, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 3. For biographical information about Catron, see the *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, "Thomas Benton Catron," <http://bioguide.congress.gov/>.
- 15 "Speaker Rips Mask Off G.O.P. Rascals and Incompetents," 2 November 1914, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 5.
- 16 Michael J. Dubin et al., *United States Congressional Elections, 1788–1997: The Official Results of the Elections of the 1st through 105th Congresses* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1998): 401.
- 17 "Hernandez Will Go to Congress as Successor to H. B. Fergusson," 4 November 1914, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 1; "Majority for



- Hernandez in State Grows as Returns Come In,” 5 November 1914, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 1.
- 18 “Hernandez Admits Race Issue Was Used in Election; Says Wilson Helps,” 5 November 1914, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 3.
- 19 *Congressional Record*, Appendix, 64th Cong., 1st sess.: 1340–1341.
- 20 Joan M. Jensen, “‘Disfranchisement Is a Disgrace’: Women and Politics in New Mexico, 1900–1940,” *New Mexico Historical Review* 56, no. 1 (January 1981): 18. Jensen quotes an activist who dismissed Hernández as Catron’s puppet as saying, Catron “simply put Hernandez in Congress before our citizens know what was being done.” Jensen argues that Catron’s position on women’s suffrage made him a political liability to Republicans in the 1916 elections, but is unclear whether this contributed to his re-election defeat.
- 21 Kendrick A. Clements, *The Presidency of Woodrow Wilson* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1992): 96–100. For a brief summary of the rise of Carranza during the Mexican Revolution, see John Mason Hart, “The Mexican Revolution, 1910–1920,” in Michael C. Meyer and William H. Beezley, eds., *The Oxford History of Mexico* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000): 435–466.
- 22 Jim Tuck, “Villa, Pancho,” *American National Biography* 22 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999): 358–359; Walter LaFeber, *The American Age: U.S. Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad, Volume 1–To 1920*, 2nd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994): 280–281; “Punishment, Not Intervention, Wilson Plan,” 10 March 1916, *Los Angeles Times*: 11. For a detailed description of the raid and the subsequent U.S. response, see Friedrich Katz, *The Life and Times of Pancho Villa* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998): 560–582.
- 23 For a summary of Mondell’s criticisms, see “House Debates Villa Raid,” 10 March 1916, *New York Times*: 3; *Congressional Record*, House, 64th Cong., 1st sess. (9 March 1916): 3874–3875.
- 24 *Congressional Record*, House, 64th Cong., 1st sess. (10 March 1916): 3907.
- 25 Clements, *The Presidency of Woodrow Wilson*, 100–101; Katz, *The Life and Times of Pancho Villa*, 566–570.
- 26 *Congressional Record*, Appendix, 64th Cong., 1st sess.: 514. For the text of the resolution, see *Congressional Record*, Appendix, 64th Cong., 1st sess. (18 February and 8 March 1916): 361–365, 453–454.
- 27 Steven V. Stathis, *Landmark Legislation, 1774–2002* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2003): 172–173; *Congressional Record*, House, 64th Cong., 1st sess. (23 March 1916): 4731. During his first term, Hernández submitted H.R. 5755, which would have paid \$2,000 in contested-election expenses to the widow of Tranquilino Luna, a Territorial Delegate from New Mexico in the 47th and 48th Congresses (1881–1885). The House did not reimburse the Luna family. For more information, see *Congressional Record*, House, 64th Cong., 1st sess. (15 December 1915): 294.
- 28 “Not Dickering, Says Hernandez, and Candidate Only for Congressman; First Statement by Returning Official,” 7 August 1916, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 3. Hernández emphasized that his candidacy was limited to Congress because a small number of *nuevomexicano* caucus delegates asked him to run for governor to maintain a balance of Anglo and *Hispano* officeholders. See “Native Editor Says G.O.P. Must Divide the Ticket Along Racial Lines,” 19 August 1916, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 2.
- 29 “William B. Walton,” in Coan, *A History of New Mexico*, vol. 2: 38–39; Territory of New Mexico, *Report of the Secretary of the Territory, 1905–1906, and Legislative Manual 1907* (Albuquerque, NM: Morning Journal, 1907): 176. Like Hernández, Walton dealt with caucus delegates who sought a balance between Anglo and *Hispano* officeholders by nominating him to the governor’s race. See “Grant County Here To See That Billy Walton Secures Nomination,” 29 August 1916, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 3; “De Baca Boom for Governorship Rapidly Getting Out of Control among Delegates,” 30 August 1916, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 3.
- 30 “The Real Issue in New Mexico,” 20 October 1916, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 6.
- 31 Clements, *The Presidency of Woodrow Wilson*: 133–134; George Thomas Kurian, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Republican Party*, vol. 2 (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1997): 475–479; Patricia A. Behlar, “Charles Evans Hughes,” in Kurian, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Republican Party*, vol. 1 (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1997): 271–272.
- 32 “Bergere Opening Hernandez Campaign,” 1 September 1916, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 5; “G.O.P. Candidates Leave Tonight for Campaign Tour of Mora and San Miguel,” 11 September 1916, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 5; “Hernandez and Hubbell Speak in Mora County,” 14 September 1916, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 3; “Republican Candidates Pleased With Trip,” 20 September 1916, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 5; “Long Distance Talking Record Is Won by G.O.P.,” 21 September 1916, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 5; “Hernandez Gets Warm Reception from Taos Crowd,” 3 October 1916, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 5; “Mexican Policy of Wilson Big Factor in Race for The House,” 21 October 1916, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 1.
- 33 Manuel Martinez, *The New Mexico Blue Book or State Official Register, Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen* (Santa Fe: New Mexico Secretary of State, 1919): 274.
- 34 Clements, *The Presidency of Woodrow Wilson*: 133–134; Betty Glad, “Hughes, Charles Evans,” *American National Biography* 11 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999): 416–421.
- 35 “The Defeat of Hernandez,” 13 November 1916, *Albuquerque Morning Journal*: 6.



- 36 Phillip Gonzales and Ann Massman, "Loyalty Questioned: Nuevomexicanos in the Great War," *Pacific Historical Review* 75, no. 4 (November 2006): 647–648. For more information about the New Mexico Council of Defense, see Walter M. Danburg, "The State Council of Defense," in Lansing B. Bloom, ed., *New Mexico in the Great War*. (Santa Fe: El Palacio Press, 1927): 22–39. For a scholarly overview of the National Council of Defense and its state equivalents, see William J. Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home: Civilian Mobilization, Wartime Federalism, and the Council of National Defense, 1917–1919* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984). For an overview of the effects of questions of loyalty and patriotism on labor repression during this period, see David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*, Twenty-Fifth Anniversary ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004): 66–75.
- 37 "Hernandez 100 Percent Yank, Is Catron Tribute," 3 October 1918, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 5.
- 38 "Tested and Found Right," 19 October 1918, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 4.
- 39 "Fall and Hernandez Are Endorsed by Kahn of California on Records," 24 October 1918, *Santa Fe New Mexican*: 3.
- 40 Martinez, *The New Mexico Blue Book or State Official Register: Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen*: 237.
- 41 David T. Canon, Garrison Nelson, and Charles Stewart III, eds., *Committees of the U.S. Congress, 1789–1946*, vol. 3 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2002): 492.
- 42 *Congressional Record*, Index, 66th Cong., 1st sess.: 9393–9394; *Congressional Record*, Index, 66th Cong., 2nd sess.: 9519; *Congressional Record*, Index, 66th Cong., 3rd sess.: 4823. Hernández again submitted an unsuccessful bill (H.R. 7373) to provide relief (\$2,000) for the estate of Tranquilino Luna. See *Congressional Record*, House, 66th Cong., 1st sess. (15 July 1919): 2666.
- 43 *Congressional Record*, Appendix, 66th Cong., 1st sess.: 8843–8844.
- 44 *Congressional Record*, Appendix and Index, 66th Cong., 1st sess. (11 November 1919): 9138–9139, 9700.
- 45 *Congressional Record*, Index, 66th Cong., 3rd sess.: 4944; *Congressional Record*, House, 66th Cong., 3rd sess. (1 March 1921): 4211–4212; Carson National Forest Act, P.L. 66-382, *Statutes at Large*, 41 Stat. 1364, 1914–1921.
- 46 The reason Hernández decided to retire remains unclear. For more on his postcongressional career, see Vigil, *Los Patronos: Profiles of Hispanic Political Leaders in New Mexico History*: 144; "Former State Congressman Dies at 92," 19 October 1954, *The New Mexican*: 1; "B. C. Hernandez, Former N.M. Representative, Dies," 20 October 1954, *Albuquerque Journal*: 14.



“I REPRESENT A STATE WHOSE
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DEFENSE OF THEIR FLAG AND
THEIR COUNTRY.”

Benigno Cárdenas Hernández
Congressional Record Appendix, March 8, 1916