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SENATE MEMORIAL 29

45TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2002

INTRODUCED BY

Rod Adair

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PUBLICATION OF HARRIET BEECHER STOWE'S *UNCLE TOM'S CABIN*.

WHEREAS, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, by Harriet Beecher Stowe, was published in 1852, one hundred fifty years ago; and

WHEREAS, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* came to be regarded as the greatest American propaganda novel, despite the fact that its author was relatively unknown and had never before published a book-length work of fiction; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Beecher Stowe was born on July 14, 1811 in Litchfield, Connecticut, where her father was a minister, and the Beecher children were raised to believe they had a reforming mission in life; and

WHEREAS, Harriet was sent to private school when she was six, and her tendency to bury herself in her books became a

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1 matter of concern to her father; and

2 WHEREAS, she moved with her father to Cincinnati in 1832,  
3 where her father was appointed president of Lane theological  
4 seminary; and

5 WHEREAS, she married Calvin Stowe in 1836 and gave birth  
6 to seven children; and

7 WHEREAS, the family lived on a meager income from  
8 Calvin's teaching position at Bowdoin college in Maine, and  
9 Harriet began writing to augment the family income; and

10 WHEREAS, in 1850, congress enacted the Fugitive Slave  
11 Law, giving bounty hunters license to hunt down runaway slaves  
12 even into northern states, and this law outraged many  
13 Americans; and

14 WHEREAS, Harriet devoted herself to writing about  
15 slavery, interviewing abolitionists in Boston and writing to  
16 Frederick Douglass for advice; and

17 WHEREAS, she sold the story of Uncle Tom to an  
18 abolitionist newspaper as a serial, starting in 1851, for  
19 three hundred dollars (\$300); and

20 WHEREAS, she could not contain her passion while writing  
21 the story, saying that "the Lord himself wrote it" and that  
22 the writing "boils and bubbles daily and nightly"; and

23 WHEREAS, the book was published in two volumes on March  
24 20, 1852 and more than three hundred thousand copies were sold  
25 by August of that year, earning Mrs. Stowe more than ten

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1 thousand dollars (\$10,000) in royalties; and

2 WHEREAS, the book was the first novel in the world to  
3 sell over one million copies and was published in twenty-one  
4 languages; and

5 WHEREAS, Ralph Waldo Emerson said that *Uncle Tom's Cabin*  
6 spoke "to the universal heart, and was read with equal  
7 interest in the parlour, in the kitchen, and in the nursery of  
8 every house"; and

9 WHEREAS, the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, the publication  
10 of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854,  
11 successively and synergistically, worked to midwife the  
12 creation of the only successful third party in American  
13 history, the republican party; and

14 WHEREAS, the territory of New Mexico actively resisted  
15 the institution of slavery no doubt due in part to the efforts  
16 of Mrs. Stowe and like-minded individuals; and

17 WHEREAS, it is a supreme irony that a relatively unknown  
18 woman of modest means, raising seven children, a woman who  
19 could not even vote, let alone participate in the political  
20 process, changed the course of American politics and history  
21 by writing *Uncle Tom's Cabin*;

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE  
23 OF NEW MEXICO that March 20, 2002 be celebrated in remembrance  
24 of Harriet Beecher Stowe, the woman who changed American  
25 history; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the Harriet Beecher Stowe center in Hartford, Connecticut.