

HOUSE MEMORIAL 41

52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2015

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

DECLARING FEBRUARY 4, 2015 "LINCOLN COUNTY DAY" AT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

WHEREAS, Hollywood has made millions of dollars based on films set in the beauty, adventure and drama of the historical American west; and

WHEREAS, the actual history of Lincoln county, New Mexico, rivals and outshines the best script Hollywood has ever produced; and

WHEREAS, being central to the original territory occupied by the Mescalero bands of the Apache people and representing the western edge of the Comanche territory, the mountains and canyons of Lincoln county stood witness as Apaches and Comanches and succeeding waves of Spanish, Mexican and Anglo-American settlers competed, often violently, for land and

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1 water; and

2 WHEREAS, the post-Civil War era saw a boom in the western
3 cattle industry, and by the mid-1870s, two rival "rings" had
4 formed to compete for land, water and power within Lincoln
5 county; and

6 WHEREAS, on February 18, 1878, the murder of one
7 ringleader, John Tunstall, by a posse deputized by Sheriff
8 William Brady and the subsequent revenge killing of Sheriff
9 Brady on April 1, 1878 began the infamous Lincoln county war;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, the Lincoln county war was conducted by men with
12 colorful names, such as "Buckshot" Anderson, "Dash" Wait, "Big
13 Jim" French and Billy "the Kid", and by groups known as the
14 "Seven Rivers Boys", the "Jesse Evans Gang" and the
15 "Regulators"; and

16 WHEREAS, many of the individuals in the Lincoln county war
17 were known alternatively to have worn a sheriff's badge or to
18 have been cattle rustlers and murderers at various points in
19 their careers; and

20 WHEREAS, during the Capitan Gap fire in the spring of
21 1950, a bear cub was rescued by firefighters and became known
22 as "Smokey Bear", Lincoln county's most famous native son; and

23 WHEREAS, Smokey Bear became a national symbol for forest
24 fire prevention and the subject of the popular song "Smokey the
25 Bear"; and

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1 WHEREAS, Smokey Bear lived at the national zoo in
2 Washington, D.C., for twenty-six years, was visited by
3 thousands of schoolchildren, received so much fan mail that the
4 United States postal service gave Smokey his own zip code, and
5 he is now buried at Smokey Bear historical park in Capitan, New
6 Mexico; and

7 WHEREAS, Lincoln county offers numerous opportunities for
8 hiking, backpacking and skiing within dramatic mountain
9 landscapes typified by Capitan peak and Sierra Blanca mountain;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Ruidoso Downs within Lincoln county offers both
12 thoroughbred and quarter horse racing, including the all-
13 American futurity, the richest race in American quarter horse
14 racing;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
16 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that Lincoln county
17 be recognized as having one of the most colorful and intriguing
18 histories in America, epitomizing the legend of the "Wild West"
19 and as being a beautiful and exciting place to live and visit;
20 and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that February 4, 2015 be declared
22 "Lincoln County Day" in the house of representatives; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
24 transmitted to the Lincoln county board of county
25 commissioners.

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