

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND TOURISM DEPARTMENTS TO
3 SPEARHEAD NEW MEXICO'S PARTICIPATION IN THE TOM LEA TRAIL.

4
5 WHEREAS, Tom Lea was born in El Paso, Texas, on
6 July 11, 1907, where his father served as mayor from 1915 to
7 1917 during the Mexican revolution; and

8 WHEREAS, after graduating from El Paso high school, Tom
9 attended the art institute of Chicago and became an
10 apprentice to muralist John Warner Norton; and

11 WHEREAS, between 1933 and 1936, Tom Lea served as an
12 illustrator for the laboratory of anthropology and
13 *New Mexico Magazine* in Santa Fe and served as a muralist for
14 the works progress administration, painting murals for
15 New Mexico state university and Branigan cultural center in
16 Las Cruces and for other public buildings in Texas and
17 Washington, D.C.; and

18 WHEREAS, as an artist-correspondent for *LIFE* magazine
19 during World War II, Tom Lea traveled over one hundred
20 thousand miles as an eyewitness recorder of American and
21 allied troops and their movements in the north Atlantic, the
22 south Pacific, England, north Africa, China and Peleliu,
23 with his iconic works published in more than ten issues of
24 the magazine; and

25 WHEREAS, after the war, in addition to continuing to

1 paint, Tom taught himself to write, including two
2 bestsellers, *The Brave Bulls* and *The Wonderful Country*, which
3 became Hollywood movies, and other works, including
4 the two-volume history of the King ranch; and

5 WHEREAS, Tom Lea was a true renaissance man who excelled
6 as a muralist, illustrator, portraitist, landscapist, studio
7 painter, war correspondent, writer and historian and whose
8 work communicates the history of the borderlands region; and

9 WHEREAS, Tom Lea died in his hometown, El Paso, on
10 January 19, 2001, and in 2007, Texas recognized its famous
11 son with a centennial celebration of his birth and the
12 establishment of Tom Lea month, with proclamations read in
13 both houses of congress and both houses of the Texas
14 legislature and El Paso city council; and

15 WHEREAS, in 2017, the Texas legislature enacted the
16 Tom Lea trail program to promote heritage tourism by
17 commemorating the life and art of Tom Lea;

18 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
19 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the cultural affairs department and
20 the tourism department be requested to join together to
21 include New Mexico in the Tom Lea trail, by showcasing his
22 murals in Las Cruces and his art and workplace in Santa Fe;
23 and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the departments be requested
25 to work with the Tom Lea institute and the Texas historical

1 commission in highlighting the prolific works of Tom Lea,
2 chronicler of the Southwest and twentieth century America;
3 and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
5 transmitted to the secretaries of cultural affairs and
6 tourism, the governor, the Tom Lea institute and the Texas
7 historical commission.

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