

A JOINT MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF NATIVE AMERICAN ARTISTS
DURING THE NEW DEAL AND DECLARING MARCH 7, 2005 AS "NATIVE
AMERICAN NEW DEAL ART DAY" AT THE LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt initiated
New Deal emergency programs in 1933 designed to boost the
national economy and help bring the country out of the great
depression; and

WHEREAS, artists created work of significant artistic,
cultural and historical value under federal sponsorship
through the New Deal's various public art projects; and

WHEREAS, New Deal funds were used to promote Indian arts
and crafts, increase employment, improve infrastructure on
reservations and construct schools; and

WHEREAS, a national exhibit of artwork completed under
the public works of art project was held at the Corcoran
gallery of art in Washington, D.C., in 1934 that included
works of art from New Mexico, two-thirds of which were Indian-
made and featured Navajo rugs, mural paintings and pottery;
and

WHEREAS, the department of the interior building in the
nation's capital, constructed between 1935 and 1936, houses
important murals by three of New Mexico's most notable Indian
artists, Velino Shije Herrera, Allan Houser and Gerald Nailor,

along with Oklahoma artist Woodrow Crumbo; and

WHEREAS, despite some shortcomings, President Roosevelt's New Deal arts programs increased the awareness and appreciation of Native American art in the nation; and

WHEREAS, many Native Americans took part in the arts programs, including Harrison Begay, Maria and Julian Martinez, Tonita Pena and her son, Joe H. Herrera and Pablita Velarde; and

WHEREAS, numerous public buildings throughout the state house Native American works of art that were produced as part of the New Deal arts programs; and

WHEREAS, many works of art produced during that time have been lost, misplaced or destroyed; and

WHEREAS, many of the artists are no longer with us today or cannot be located; and

WHEREAS, the arts programs recorded and presented the essence of New Mexico geographically, culturally, artistically, architecturally, agriculturally and environmentally;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that March 7, 2005 be designated as "Native American New Deal Art Day" at the legislature; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it recognize Pablita Velarde and Harrison Begay, the two living representatives of the group of New Deal artists; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it honor the memory of New Mexico's other Native American New Deal artists through their families present at the legislature; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the work of these artists be commemorated and celebrated as among the greatest accomplishments of this state, particularly when considering the economic circumstances under which they were created; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislature celebrate the lives and contributions of those fine artists and strive to preserve their accomplishments to share them with future generations as a message of beauty and hope; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the copies of this memorial be transmitted to Native American New Deal artists and their families.