

A MEMORIAL

PROCLAIMING FEBRUARY 18, 2009 AS "PLUTO IS A PLANET IN NEW MEXICO DAY" AT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND HONORING THE SEVENTY-NINTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DISCOVERY OF PLUTO BY CLYDE TOMBAUGH.

WHEREAS, Dr. Clyde Tombaugh is best known for discovering the planet Pluto in 1930, but he also discovered and named a total of fourteen asteroids; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Tombaugh also engaged in serious scientific research regarding unidentified flying objects; and

WHEREAS, on August 20, 1949, Dr. Tombaugh claimed to have seen several unidentified flying objects near Las Cruces, stating "I doubt that the phenomenon was any terrestrial reflection because ... nothing of the kind has ever appeared before or since"; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Tombaugh worked at the White Sands missile range during the 1950s and taught astronomy at New Mexico state university from 1955 until his retirement in 1973; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Tombaugh died in Las Cruces in 1997; and

WHEREAS, approximately one ounce of his ashes is being carried on the New Horizons spacecraft that was launched in 2006 and that is scheduled for a fly-by of Pluto in 2014; and

WHEREAS, Pluto was recognized as a planet for seventy-five years; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Clyde Tombaugh's discoveries have shaped and advanced the field of astronomy; and

WHEREAS, his enduring scientific accomplishments and personal contributions shine brightly on New Mexico state university as well as the rest of the world; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is proud to recognize these accomplishments and contributions; and

WHEREAS, thanks to Dr. Clyde Tombaugh, Pluto will always be considered a planet in New Mexico;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that February 18, 2009 be proclaimed "Pluto is a Planet in New Mexico Day" at the house of representatives in honor of the seventy-ninth anniversary of the discovery of Pluto by Clyde Tombaugh; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the family members of Dr. Clyde Tombaugh.