

HOUSE MEMORIAL 47

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2019

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT TO STUDY THE
FEASIBILITY OF SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS
EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE
INCLUSION OF LOS LUCEROS AS A FUTURE WORLD HERITAGE SITE IN
ANTICIPATION OF THE UNITED STATES REJOINING THE UNITED NATIONS
EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION.

WHEREAS, New Mexico is renowned for its artistic
temperament and stunning historic landscape; and

WHEREAS, one of the most historically significant and
impressive sites in the state is the one-hundred-forty-eight-
acre Los Luceros historic property located north of Espanola
along the Rio Grande near the village of Alcalde; and

WHEREAS, ancient peoples once farmed and dwelled on Los
Luceros land, and two Pueblo communities are located next to

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1 the land; and

2 WHEREAS, Los Luceros is the core of an early Spanish land
3 grant that was established by General Don Diego DeVargas in
4 1705 and has been known by many names over the centuries, but
5 the name that stuck is Los Luceros, the morning stars; and

6 WHEREAS, during the Mexican period of New Mexico history,
7 from 1821 to 1846, Los Luceros evolved into a sustainable
8 working farm and ranch; and

9 WHEREAS, in the waning years of Mexican rule, Los Luceros
10 was the county seat for Rio Arriba county; and

11 WHEREAS, the territorial period of New Mexico's history,
12 from 1846 to 1912, was an era that brought new laws, new
13 people, a new language and many economic and social schemes to
14 the region, according to *El Palacio* author Michael Miller; and

15 WHEREAS, after New Mexico achieved statehood, the Los
16 Luceros area absorbed an influx of women from the eastern
17 United States, including Mary Cabot Wheelwright, who bought Los
18 Luceros and made it into an estate that employed local Native
19 Americans and Hispanos; and

20 WHEREAS, Mary Cabot Wheelwright led an active social life
21 and introduced many artistic friends to the southwest; and

22 WHEREAS, when Mary Cabot Wheelwright died in 1958, she
23 bequeathed the ranch house at Los Luceros to the Wheelwright
24 museum in Santa Fe and left the remaining property to her
25 friend, Maria Chabot; and

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1 WHEREAS, the museum declined the bequest and the ranch
2 house reverted to Maria Chabot, who then enlisted her friend,
3 Georgia O'Keeffe, to find a buyer; and

4 WHEREAS, Charles Collier, a friend of Georgia O'Keeffe's,
5 purchased the property and lived there with his wife, Nina,
6 until selling the property in the 1970s; and

7 WHEREAS, a series of owners tried to maintain the property
8 in the following years; and

9 WHEREAS, in 1983, Los Luceros was placed on the national
10 register of historic places and the property is also on the New
11 Mexico state register of cultural properties; and

12 WHEREAS, the cultural affairs department purchased the Los
13 Luceros property in 2008 and is working to ensure the site's
14 preservation and integrity in perpetuity; and

15 WHEREAS, today, the centerpiece of the historic ranch
16 complex is the hacienda, a five-thousand-seven-hundred-square-
17 foot, eighteenth century territorial-style adobe home; and

18 WHEREAS, the renovated property also includes a visitor's
19 center, director's residence, visitor center complex and
20 irrigated pasture and bosque on the Rio Grande; and

21 WHEREAS, the cultural affairs department's intent is to
22 bring together historic preservation, filmmaking, education and
23 training and agricultural and environmental interests; and

24 WHEREAS, Los Luceros is used as a cultural destination
25 with interpretative exhibits and public access, as a retreat

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1 center for workshops and seminars related to New Mexico's film
2 industry and for crop-growing and environmental studies
3 programs; and

4 WHEREAS, the United Nations educational, scientific and
5 cultural organization seeks to encourage the identification,
6 protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage
7 around the world that is considered to be of outstanding value
8 to humanity; and

9 WHEREAS, the application process for a United Nations
10 educational, scientific and cultural organization designation
11 is rigorous; and

12 WHEREAS, New Mexico has three United Nations educational,
13 scientific and cultural organization designated sites: the
14 Pueblo of Taos, Carlsbad caverns national park and Chaco
15 culture, which includes Chaco culture national historical park,
16 Aztec ruins national monument and several smaller Chaco sites
17 managed by the United States bureau of land management; and

18 WHEREAS, these world heritage sites bring significant
19 prestige to New Mexico and are a significant boost to tourism
20 and the economy; and

21 WHEREAS, historic Los Luceros lies halfway between Santa
22 Fe and Taos, two major tourist destinations in New Mexico; and

23 WHEREAS, the Pueblo of Taos welcomes millions of visitors
24 a year, Carlsbad caverns national park reports over four
25 hundred ten thousand visitors a year and Chaco culture reports

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1 five hundred fifty thousand visitors a year; and

2 WHEREAS, a historic property of Los Luceros' significance
3 deserves wider recognition and is deserving of inclusion as a
4 United Nations educational, scientific and cultural
5 organization world heritage site; and

6 WHEREAS, as a heritage site, Los Luceros could have the
7 potential of attracting one hundred thousand visitors a year,
8 and, at an estimated ten-dollar (\$10.00) entry fee per visitor,
9 could generate an income of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) a
10 year;

11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
12 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the cultural
13 affairs department be requested to study the feasibility of
14 submitting an application to the United Nations educational,
15 scientific and cultural organization for the inclusion of Los
16 Luceros as a future world heritage site in anticipation of the
17 United States rejoining the United Nations educational,
18 scientific and cultural organization; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
20 transmitted to the secretary of cultural affairs and the
21 president of los amigos del rancho Los Luceros.

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