

1 A MEMORIAL

2 DECLARING FEBRUARY 7, 2024 "LINCOLN COUNTY DAY" IN THE HOUSE  
3 OF REPRESENTATIVES.

4  
5 WHEREAS, Hollywood has made millions of dollars based on  
6 films set in the beauty, adventure and drama of the  
7 historical American west; and

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

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

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

22 WHEREAS, on February 18, 1878, the murder of one  
23 ringleader, John Tunstall, by a posse deputized by Sheriff  
24 William Brady, and the subsequent revenge killing of Sheriff  
25 Brady on April 1, 1878, began the infamous Lincoln County

1 War; and

2 WHEREAS, the Lincoln County War was conducted by men  
3 with colorful names, such as "Buckshot" Roberts, "Dash" Wait,  
4 "Big Jim" French and Billy "the Kid", and by groups known as  
5 the "Seven Rivers Warriors", the "Jesse Evans Gang" and the  
6 "Regulators"; and

7 WHEREAS, many of the individuals in the Lincoln County  
8 War were known alternatively to have worn a sheriff's badge  
9 or to have been cattle rustlers and murderers at various  
10 points in their careers; and

11 WHEREAS, during the Capitan Gap fire in the spring of  
12 1950, a bear cub was rescued by firefighters and became known  
13 as "Smokey Bear", Lincoln county's most famous native son;  
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Smokey Bear became a national symbol for forest  
16 fire prevention and the subject of the popular song "Smokey  
17 the Bear"; and

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

24 WHEREAS, Lincoln county offers numerous opportunities  
25 for hiking, backpacking and skiing within dramatic mountain

1 landscapes typified by Capitan peak and Sierra Blanca  
2 mountain; and

3 WHEREAS, Ruidoso Downs in Lincoln county offers both  
4 thoroughbred and quarter horse racing, including the all  
5 American futurity, the richest race in American quarter horse  
6 racing;

7 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
8 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that Lincoln  
9 county be recognized as having one of the most colorful and  
10 intriguing histories in America, epitomizing the legend of  
11 the "Wild West" and being a beautiful and exciting place to  
12 live and visit; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that February 7, 2024 be declared  
14 "Lincoln County Day" in the house of representatives; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be  
16 transmitted to the Lincoln county board of county  
17 commissioners.

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