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HOUSE MEMORIAL 53

**56TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2024**

INTRODUCED BY

Harlan Vincent

A MEMORIAL

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

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

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

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

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1 water; and

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

6 WHEREAS, on February 18, 1878, the murder of one  
7 ringleader, John Tunstall, by a posse deputized by Sheriff  
8 William Brady, and the subsequent revenge killing of Sheriff  
9 Brady on April 1, 1878, began the infamous Lincoln County War;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, the Lincoln County War was conducted by men with  
12 colorful names, such as "Buckshot" Roberts, "Dash" Wait, "Big  
13 Jim" French and Billy "the Kid", and by groups known as the  
14 "Seven Rivers Warriors", the "Jesse Evans Gang" and the  
15 "Regulators"; and

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

20 WHEREAS, during the Capitan Gap fire in the spring of  
21 1950, a bear cub was rescued by firefighters and became known  
22 as "Smokey Bear", Lincoln county's most famous native son; and

23 WHEREAS, Smokey Bear became a national symbol for forest  
24 fire prevention and the subject of the popular song "Smokey the  
25 Bear"; and

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