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SENATE MEMORIAL 18

53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2018

INTRODUCED BY
Mary Kay Papen

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND TOURISM DEPARTMENTS TO
SPEARHEAD NEW MEXICO'S PARTICIPATION IN THE TOM LEA TRAIL.

WHEREAS, Tom Lea was born in El Paso, Texas, on July 11,
1907, where his father served as mayor from 1915 to 1917 during
the Mexican revolution; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from El Paso high school, Tom
attended the art institute of Chicago and became an apprentice
to muralist John Warner Norton; and

WHEREAS, between 1933 and 1936, Tom Lea served as an
illustrator for the laboratory of anthropology and *New Mexico*
Magazine in Santa Fe and served as a muralist for the works
progress administration, painting murals for New Mexico state
university and Branigan cultural center in Las Cruces and for
other public buildings in Texas and Washington, D.C.; and

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1 WHEREAS, as an artist-correspondent for *LIFE* magazine
2 during World War II, Tom Lea traveled over one hundred thousand
3 miles as an eyewitness recorder of American and allied troops
4 and their movements in the north Atlantic, the south Pacific,
5 England, north Africa, China and Peleliu, with his iconic works
6 published in more than ten issues of the magazine; and

7 WHEREAS, after the war, in addition to continuing to
8 paint, Tom taught himself to write, including two bestsellers,
9 *The Brave Bulls* and *The Wonderful Country*, which became
10 Hollywood movies, and other works, including the two-volume
11 history of the King ranch; and

12 WHEREAS, Tom Lea was a true renaissance man who excelled
13 as a muralist, illustrator, portraitist, landscapist, studio
14 painter, war correspondent, writer and historian and whose work
15 communicates the history of the borderlands region; and

16 WHEREAS, Tom Lea died in his hometown, El Paso, on January
17 19, 2001, and in 2007, Texas recognized its famous son with a
18 centennial celebration of his birth and the establishment of
19 Tom Lea month, with proclamations read in both houses of
20 congress and both houses of the Texas legislature and El Paso
21 city council; and

22 WHEREAS, in 2017, the Texas legislature enacted the Tom
23 Lea trail program to promote heritage tourism by commemorating
24 the life and art of Tom Lea;

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE

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1 OF NEW MEXICO that the cultural affairs department and the
2 tourism department be requested to join together to include New
3 Mexico in the Tom Lea trail, by showcasing his murals in Las
4 Cruces and his art and workplace in Santa Fe; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the departments be requested
6 to work with the Tom Lea institute and the Texas historical
7 commission in highlighting the prolific works of Tom Lea,
8 chronicler of the Southwest and twentieth century America; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
10 transmitted to the secretaries of cultural affairs and tourism,
11 the governor, the Tom Lea institute and the Texas historical
12 commission.