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SENATE MEMORIAL 40

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2020

INTRODUCED BY

Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics

A MEMORIAL

DECLARING FEBRUARY 4, 2020 "SMOKEY BEAR DAY" IN THE SENATE.

WHEREAS, one spring day in 1950, a wildfire broke out in the Capitan mountains of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, as crews from New Mexico and Texas battled the blaze, they received a report of a lone bear cub seen wandering near the fire line; and

WHEREAS, about thirty of the firefighters were trapped directly in the path of the fire storm but survived the fire; and

WHEREAS, the little cub took refuge in a charred tree, escaping the fire but suffering badly burned paws and hind legs; and

WHEREAS, the crew removed the cub from the tree, and the cub was flown to Santa Fe where a veterinarian treated and

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1 bandaged the cub's burns; and

2 WHEREAS, the cub found a home at the national zoo in
3 Washington, D.C., and was recognized as the living symbol of
4 Smokey Bear; and

5 WHEREAS, upon Smokey Bear's death in 1976, he was returned
6 to New Mexico and was buried at the Smokey Bear historical park
7 in Capitan; and

8 WHEREAS, Smokey Bear continues to be one of the most-loved
9 ambassadors for fire prevention, with a legacy that remains
10 relevant to this day; and

11 WHEREAS, Smokey Bear's seventy-fifth birthday was
12 celebrated on August 9, 2019; and

13 WHEREAS, Smokey Bear was so popular that the United States
14 postal service gave him his own postage stamp, and he is the
15 only "person" to have his own zip code besides the president;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Smokey Bear's signature phrase "only you can
18 prevent wildfires" is part of the American lexicon; and

19 WHEREAS, Smokey Bear's message resonates today with nearly
20 nine out of ten wildfires nationwide caused by humans; and

21 WHEREAS, Smokey Bear's unique and important role is
22 focused on preventing unwanted, human-caused wildfires by
23 educating the public and encouraging them to be responsible;

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
25 OF NEW MEXICO that February 4, 2020 be designated "Smokey Bear

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1 Day" in the senate in recognition of the ongoing urgency of
2 reducing wildfires; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
4 transmitted to the secretary of energy, minerals and natural
5 resources, the forestry division of the energy, minerals and
6 natural resources department and the Capitan division and the
7 chief of the United States forest service.