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HOUSE MEMORIAL 54

**52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2016**

INTRODUCED BY

Patricia Roybal Caballero

A MEMORIAL

DECLARING THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 2-8, 2016, "CHICANO-HISPANO HISTORY WEEK" AT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

WHEREAS, the conclusion of the Mexican-American War on February 2, 1848 saw the formal relinquishment of Mexican claims to its former territory in Texas and the transfer of five hundred twenty-five thousand square miles of additional land from Mexico to the United States; and

WHEREAS, former Mexican lands now comprise all or part of eight states in the American west, including Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming and Texas, which became part of the United States following the war; and

WHEREAS, in 1848, tens of thousands of people, who had been Mexican citizens and who were then termed "Mexican

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1 Americans", lived in and comprised large portions of the  
2 populace in each of the new American territories and states;  
3 and

4 WHEREAS, these new American citizens lived in communities  
5 established as Spanish settlements and colonies hundreds of  
6 years earlier; spoke Spanish not English; and had developed a  
7 unique and rich culture built on Spanish and Mexican origins  
8 and influenced by neighboring American Indian communities; and

9 WHEREAS, most Mexican American communities in the 1800s  
10 were farming and ranching communities, and a key element of  
11 their economy was communal use of community lands, a legal  
12 construct that had almost vanished in the rest of the United  
13 States; and

14 WHEREAS, after the end of the Mexican-American War in  
15 1848, the single largest governmental, social and cultural  
16 challenge faced by New Mexico and much of the American west was  
17 how to accommodate the wave of migration from the midwestern  
18 and eastern states while maintaining the established economy  
19 and culture; and

20 WHEREAS, the generations following the Mexican-American  
21 War were marked by various systematic failures to meet this  
22 challenge. In many cases, the existing culture was displaced  
23 and the established residents were dispossessed of their lands;  
24 and

25 WHEREAS, New Mexico is unique in the American west in that

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1 although there was broad economic disruption of Mexican  
2 American communities following the war, it was not nearly as  
3 extensive in New Mexico as in other states. Further, not only  
4 were many of the pre-war cultural traditions retained by New  
5 Mexico's community land grants, acequias, moradas and barrios,  
6 but those traditions continue to be revitalized by each new  
7 generation; and

8 WHEREAS, in the mid-1900s, the descendants of "Mexican  
9 Americans" began to refer to themselves more and more as  
10 "Chicanos", a term allowing for cultural identity but also  
11 distinctly American; and

12 WHEREAS, the decades following World War II witnessed the  
13 emergence of dynamic Chicano influences on the national  
14 American culture, politics and economics; and

15 WHEREAS, poets, novelists and movie writers such as  
16 Josephina Niggli, Rudolfo Anaya, Sandra Cisneros and Luis  
17 Valdez have created a cultural dialogue that has expanded the  
18 meaning of "American"; and

19 WHEREAS, American jazz, pop and rock and roll have been  
20 heavily influenced by musicians and bands such as Eduardo  
21 "Lalo" Guerrero, Al Hurricane, Don Tostí, Carlos Santana, Los  
22 Lobos, Linda Ronstadt and Ozomatli; and

23 WHEREAS, the structure of America's politics and economy  
24 has changed, and Chicanos have gained a stronger footing within  
25 American society, in part through the activism of Edward Ross

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1 "Ed" Roybal and the community service organization; Cesar  
2 Chavez and Dolores Huerta, who founded the united farm workers;  
3 and Pedro "Pete" Tijerina, Jr., and the Mexican American legal  
4 defense and education fund; and

5 WHEREAS, today, Chicano children sometimes dream of being  
6 astronauts and might not even realize they would be following  
7 in the footsteps of former space shuttle crew members Ellen  
8 Ochoa and José M. Hernandez; and

9 WHEREAS, more recently, many Chicanos and other Americans  
10 of Spanish cultural heritage have adopted the term "Hispano" as  
11 a more acceptable and applicable term for cultural identity in  
12 New Mexico;

13 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
14 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the week of  
15 February 2-8, 2016, be declared "Chicano-Hispano History Week"  
16 at the house of representatives; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be  
18 transmitted to the secretary of cultural affairs.

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