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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 54  
**49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009**  
INTRODUCED BY  
W. Ken Martinez and Michael S. Sanchez

A JOINT MEMORIAL  
RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL  
AND JOINING THE NATION IN COMMEMORATING HIS BIRTH.

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln was born on February 12, 1809 in  
Hardin county, Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, Lincoln was a common man whose parents were  
farmers; and

WHEREAS, the nation and the world are invited to celebrate  
the birth, life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln on February 12,  
2009 for the bicentennial celebration of his birth; and

WHEREAS, when Lincoln was born, the Spanish empire was in  
its last year, and the spirit of independence was rising up and  
moving across its lands, including in its far northern  
settlements in New Mexico, and within one year of Lincoln's  
birth, Mexico declared its independence from Spain; and

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1           WHEREAS, Lincoln began his political career in 1832 as a  
2 member of the Whig party, serving four successive terms in the  
3 Illinois house of representatives; and

4           WHEREAS, in 1837, Lincoln made his first protest against  
5 slavery in the Illinois house of representatives, stating that  
6 the institution of slavery was "founded on both injustice and  
7 bad policy"; and

8           WHEREAS, in 1846, Lincoln was elected to the United States  
9 house of representatives at the very moment when New Mexico was  
10 under attack by United States forces because of President  
11 Polk's war with Mexico; and

12           WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln firmly believed that President  
13 Polk had started a war of aggression based on deceit, and on  
14 two occasions, Lincoln rose in the house of representatives to  
15 question Polk's veracity, and his voice of dissent against this  
16 popular conflict was immediately labeled "unpatriotic"; and

17           WHEREAS, during Lincoln's life, New Mexico became a part  
18 of the Mexican republic and, following the Mexican-American war  
19 of 1846-1848, became a territory of the United States in 1851;  
20 and

21           WHEREAS, building upon a campaign against the expansion of  
22 slavery beyond the states in which it already existed, on  
23 November 6, 1860, Lincoln was elected as the sixteenth  
24 president of the United States; and

25           WHEREAS, the Civil War began within six months of

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1 Lincoln's inauguration and New Mexico's own 1862 battle of  
2 Glorieta pass, characterized as the "Gettysburg of the West",  
3 which marked the confederacy's southwest aspirations; and

4 WHEREAS, the Emancipation Proclamation issued by President  
5 Lincoln, though not as far-reaching as most people imagine,  
6 remains one of the nation's most important historical  
7 documents; and

8 WHEREAS, Lincoln's leadership in the Civil War era, coming  
9 as it did so soon after American sovereignty over New Mexico,  
10 made the then-fledgling Republican party a strong force in  
11 early New Mexico politics; and

12 WHEREAS, during the Civil War, Lincoln displayed a  
13 remarkable capacity for moral growth and self-reflection,  
14 ushering in a nation divided yet destined to find social  
15 healing; and

16 WHEREAS, on February 24, 1863, President Lincoln affixed  
17 his signature to the document that separated the territory of  
18 Arizona from New Mexico; and

19 WHEREAS, President Lincoln may be best known in New Mexico  
20 for the "Lincoln canes", which are ebony and capped with a  
21 silver crown inscribed with "A. Lincoln" and were presented in  
22 1864 to the nineteen Pueblo Indian governors in recognition of  
23 the pueblos' newly received land patents and sovereignty that  
24 drew from a tradition implemented by the Spanish and Mexican  
25 governments; and

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1           WHEREAS, Lincoln's name was memorialized in New Mexico  
2 when Lincoln county was established in 1869 and subsequently  
3 gave its name to the infamous Lincoln County War; and

4           WHEREAS, the Lincoln forest reserve was created in 1902  
5 and was renamed Lincoln national forest in 1918; and

6           WHEREAS, in 1909, the thirty-eighth New Mexico legislative  
7 assembly passed Joint Resolution Number Five, which stated:  
8 "Lincoln Centenary Declared to be Legal Holiday in New Mexico";  
9 and

10           WHEREAS, on February 12, 1909, Governor George Curry  
11 issued the Lincoln Day Proclamation, recognizing the one  
12 hundredth anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, and he  
13 recommended that it be recognized as a legal holiday; and

14           WHEREAS, in President Barack Obama's victory speech  
15 invoking Lincoln, President Obama reminded Americans that hope  
16 is one of the most powerful forces underlying transformation,  
17 and he encouraged all Americans to recognize that, in spite of  
18 doubts and divisions, Americans must always endeavor to "place  
19 our hands on the arc of history and bend it once more toward  
20 the hope of a better day"; and

21           WHEREAS, President Obama's confidence reflects the  
22 delicacy and strength of that moment and the man and movement  
23 behind it and comes as a reminder of the resplendent greatness  
24 of President Lincoln as we commemorate the bicentennial of his  
25 birth;

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