

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO ISSUE A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING  
3 2021 AS THE "INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF CAVES AND KARST".  
4

5 WHEREAS, caves and related landforms like sinkholes,  
6 springs and sinking streams, collectively known as karst,  
7 present some of the world's most dramatic landscapes; and

8 WHEREAS, caves and karst have diverse economic,  
9 ecologic, scientific and cultural impacts around New Mexico,  
10 the United States and the world; and

11 WHEREAS, Carlsbad Caverns national park alone has an  
12 economic benefit of about thirty-four million dollars  
13 (\$34,000,000) each year for New Mexico; and

14 WHEREAS, other New Mexico cave tourist destinations  
15 include Bottomless Lakes state park, Santa Rosa blue hole,  
16 the ice cave and Bandera volcano and El Malpais national  
17 monument; and

18 WHEREAS, the country's first underground wilderness was  
19 established in New Mexico to protect the spectacular  
20 Lechuguilla cave; and

21 WHEREAS, the country's first underground national  
22 conservation area was established in New Mexico to protect  
23 the equally amazing Fort Stanton-Snowy River Cave national  
24 conservation area; and

25 WHEREAS, the primary water supplies for roughly fifteen

1 percent of New Mexico are karst aquifers, especially  
2 supporting the communities in the southeast quadrant of the  
3 state; and

4 WHEREAS, recognizing New Mexico's significance and  
5 interest in the area, the United States congress established  
6 the national cave and karst research institute, located in  
7 New Mexico in partnership with the state and under the  
8 administration of the New Mexico institute of mining and  
9 technology; and

10 WHEREAS, insect-eating bats from New Mexico's caves and  
11 around the country save American agriculture twenty-three  
12 billion dollars (\$23,000,000,000) each year in pesticides;  
13 and

14 WHEREAS, globally, bats help produce more than four  
15 hundred fifty foods, medicines and industrial products, in  
16 addition to other benefits; and

17 WHEREAS, caves in New Mexico and worldwide are the main  
18 repositories of thousands of years of rich cultural history  
19 found nowhere else; and

20 WHEREAS, karst and related pseudokarst areas are  
21 landscapes that make up twenty-five percent of the United  
22 States and about twenty percent of the planet's land surface;  
23 and

24 WHEREAS, while cave and karst areas have multiple  
25 benefits, they also pose many challenges, as their aquifers

1 are easily contaminated and drained, and sinkholes alone  
2 cause over three hundred million dollars (\$300,000,000) in  
3 road damage in the United States each year; and

4 WHEREAS, through the national cave and karst research  
5 institute, the New Mexico institute of mining and technology  
6 and their partners, New Mexico is taking the lead in  
7 sustainably maximizing the benefits of caves and karst, while  
8 reducing adverse impacts, through research and education  
9 programs; and

10 WHEREAS, in recognition of the many benefits and  
11 challenges provided by caves and karst in the areas where  
12 they occur, the international union of speleology is  
13 spearheading the celebration of 2021 as the international  
14 year of caves and karst;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
16 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the governor  
17 be requested to acknowledge the importance of caves and karst  
18 in New Mexico by issuing a proclamation recognizing 2021 as  
19 the "International Year of Caves and Karst"; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
21 transmitted to the governor and the executive director of the  
22 national cave and karst research institute. \_\_\_\_\_

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