

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO
3 INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL MUSEUM
4 OF NEW DEAL ART TO BE LOCATED IN THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
5 BUILDING IN THE MUSEUM HILL NEIGHBORHOOD OF SANTA FE.

6
7 WHEREAS, in the 1930s, President Franklin D. Roosevelt
8 proposed a program referred to as the new deal to help pull
9 the United States out of the great depression; and

10 WHEREAS, as part of the new deal, President Roosevelt
11 created the works progress administration by executive order
12 on May 6, 1935; and

13 WHEREAS, the works progress administration was an
14 ambitious employment and infrastructure program and over its
15 eight years of existence put roughly eight million five
16 hundred thousand Americans to work at a time when over eleven
17 million people were unemployed; and

18 WHEREAS, thousands of artists, architects, craftsmen,
19 construction workers and educators found jobs in works
20 progress administration projects, which flourished during the
21 great depression; and

22 WHEREAS, in roughly the first four months of 1934, the
23 public works of art project hired three thousand seven
24 hundred forty-nine artists and produced fifteen thousand six
25 hundred sixty-three paintings, murals, prints, crafts and

1 sculptures for government buildings around the country; and

2 WHEREAS, two of the works progress administration's most
3 successful artists were the young Mark Rothko and Jackson
4 Pollock; and

5 WHEREAS, Mark Rothko worked for the works progress
6 administration from 1936 to 1937 and got his first
7 commissions for his abstract expressionism art through the
8 program; and

9 WHEREAS, Jackson Pollock spent eight years working for
10 the works progress administration, along with his wife and
11 fellow abstract expressionist, Lee Krasner, and both remained
12 with the works progress administration until 1943; and

13 WHEREAS, Dorothea Lange is one of the most influential
14 photographers of the federal art project, known for her
15 compelling images of the dust bowl and images of struggling
16 farm families and migrant workers in California; and

17 WHEREAS, Walker Evans's photographs of small towns and
18 tenant farmers in West Virginia for the federal art project
19 made him one of the most celebrated American new deal
20 photographers; and

21 WHEREAS, Dutch artist Willem de Kooning credited his
22 time with the works progress administration, from 1935 to
23 1937, for teaching him to think of himself as an artist
24 first; and

25 WHEREAS, Diego Rivera, a world famous muralist, had

1 important works of public art commissioned under the auspices
2 of the works progress administration in 1939 and 1949; and

3 WHEREAS, the Indian arts and crafts board hired many
4 notable Native American artists, such as New Mexico's Pop
5 Chalee and Pablita Velarde; and

6 WHEREAS, in New Mexico, Allan Houser, known worldwide
7 later in life as a master sculptor, painted traditional two-
8 dimensional works of art as part of the new deal programs;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Gene Kloss of Taos is best known for her
11 etchings and created a new deal etching, "Christmas Eve, Taos
12 Pueblo", which is part of a group of nine etchings of New
13 Mexico scenes; and

14 WHEREAS, the area coordinator for the works progress
15 administration's public works of art project was woodblock
16 printer, painter and marionette-maker Gustave Baumann, a
17 leading member of the Santa Fe art community; and

18 WHEREAS, other notable new deal artists out of the more
19 than ten thousand artists who were commissioned to work for
20 the federal art project were Gertrude Abercrombie, Benjamin
21 Abramowitz, Henry Bannarn, Patricino Barela, Harrison Begay,
22 John Steuart Curry, Marsden Hartley, Sargent Claude Johnson,
23 Helmuth Naumer, Louise Nevelson, Elizabeth Olds, John French
24 Sloan, Ralph Stackpole, Elizabeth Terrell and Mark Voris; and

25 WHEREAS, other new deal artists went on to successful

1 careers in their chosen fields, and the work of these artists
2 is worthy of inclusion in a national museum of new deal art;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, as weapons production for World War II began
5 ramping up and unemployment dropped, the federal government
6 decided a national relief program was no longer needed and
7 the works progress administration shut down in June 1943; and

8 WHEREAS, although many new deal treasures still exist in
9 museums and public buildings today, some have been painted
10 over, destroyed or stolen; and

11 WHEREAS, it is imperative that the history of new deal
12 art be preserved; and

13 WHEREAS, museum hill in Santa Fe is home to four world-
14 class museums: the museum of Indian arts and culture, the
15 museum of international folk art, the Wheelwright museum of
16 the American Indian and the museum of Spanish colonial art;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, visitors to museum hill can also experience a
19 unique shopping experience at the Case trading post, built to
20 resemble a turn-of-the-century Navajo reservation trading
21 post, and enjoy the cuisine and ambiance of the museum hill
22 café; and

23 WHEREAS, next to museum hill is one of Santa Fe's iconic
24 buildings, the former national park service building, at 1100
25 old Santa Fe trail; and

1 WHEREAS, the twenty-four-thousand-square-foot adobe
2 building was built between 1937 and 1939 by the new deal's
3 civilian conservation corps, and most of the two hundred
4 civilian conservation corps members were young men from
5 Hispanic families in the Santa Fe area; and

6 WHEREAS, the national park service building, with its
7 significant works progress administration history, would be
8 an ideal location for a national museum of new deal art; and

9 WHEREAS, tourism is big business in New Mexico, and
10 tourism is a key contributor to the state's economy; and

11 WHEREAS, the tourism department reports that the state's
12 tourism industry had a six-billion-six-hundred-million-dollar
13 (\$6,600,000,000) impact on the New Mexico economy in 2017,
14 the largest in state history; and

15 WHEREAS, tourism department statistics also cite visitor
16 spending in 2017 that generated six hundred sixty-two million
17 dollars (\$662,000,000) in state and local taxes and that
18 sustained ninety-four thousand jobs; and

19 WHEREAS, a national museum of new deal art, located in
20 the national park service building next to museum hill, has
21 the potential of being a significant tourist destination and
22 source of additional state revenue;

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
24 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New
25 Mexico congressional delegation be requested to investigate

1 the possibility of establishing a national museum of new deal
2 art to be located in the national park service building in
3 the museum hill neighborhood of Santa Fe; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
5 transmitted to members of the New Mexico congressional
6 delegation and the secretary of tourism. _____

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