

1 A MEMORIAL

2 DECLARING JANUARY 23, 2024 "SMOKEY BEAR DAY" IN THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES.

4
5 WHEREAS, one spring day in 1950, a wildfire broke out in
6 the Capitan mountains of New Mexico; and

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

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

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

16 WHEREAS, the crew removed the cub from the tree, and the
17 cub was flown to Santa Fe where a veterinarian treated and
18 bandaged the cub's burns; and

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

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

25 WHEREAS, Smokey Bear continues to be one of the most-

1 loved ambassadors for fire prevention, with a legacy that
2 remains relevant to this day; and

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

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

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

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

16 WHEREAS, the United States forest service is celebrating
17 Smokey Bear's eightieth birthday in 2024;

18 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
19 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that January 23,
20 2024 be designated "Smokey Bear Day" in the house of
21 representatives in recognition of the ongoing urgency of
22 reducing wildfires; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
24 transmitted to the secretary of energy, minerals and natural
25 resources, the forestry division of the energy, minerals and

