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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

**SPONSOR** Maestas/ Garcia **ORIGINAL DATE** 2/9/16  
Richard **LAST UPDATED** 2/14/16 **HM** 52/aHJC

**SHORT TITLE** “ Troubled Teen Industry” and Boot Camp Reform **SB** \_\_\_\_\_

**ANALYST** Chilton

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY16	FY17		
	None		

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)

Children Youth and Families Department (CYFD)

#### Responses Not Received From

Attorney General’s Office (AGO)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of House Judiciary Committee amendment to HM 52

Strikes the WHEREAS clause referring Tierra Blanca ranch.

#### Synopsis of Original Memorial

HM 52, “Troubled Teen Industry” and Boot Camp Reform, express concern over problems that have occurred in boot camps around the country, including a death in a southern New Mexico boot camp for troubled youth in 2013. It asks that the New Mexico House of Representatives express this concern to the Governor, the Secretary of CYFD, the AOC, the AGO, and to each member of the New Mexico congressional delegation, asking the delegation to support federal legislation to reform residential treatment and boot camps for troubled teens nationwide.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

None

## SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The so-called “troubled-teen industry” and boot camps for teens with problems have been controversial for many years. Concern in New Mexico spiked with a teenager’s death in a southern New Mexico boot camp in 2013. Attempts to regulate the industry have taken place at a federal level since at least 2005, when a federal Government Accountability Office (GAO) report indicated that 1,619 employees of such programs, in 33 states, had been implicated in abuse incidents. According to one advocacy group, there have been over 300 deaths in programs such as these.

Maia Szalavitz, a senior fellow at the Statistical Assessment Service, in her book, *Help at Any Cost: How the Troubled-Teen Industry Cons Parents and Hurts Kids*, details her research into the industry done through interviews and court records. She gives advice to parents on finding responsible and safe programs.

The American Bar Association issued a white paper on camps and residential facilities for troubled teens in 2007. They concluded that “both proponents and critics have agreed that some of these private facilities have the potential to produce substantial gains for participants, especially academically. Though recidivism rates are high, and the majority of juveniles do re-offend within the first year after leaving the boot camps, many participants enter with below-grade-level skills and advance academically and even progress up to several grade levels. Furthermore, a 2003 National Institute of Justice report found that juveniles in boot camps ‘reported decreased anxiety and depression, better impulse control, and better social attitudes than their counterparts in other types of juvenile facilities.’” However, they also noted the GAO report indicating findings of “youths forced to eat their own vomit, denied adequate food, beaten and thrown to the ground, and forced to endure the humiliation of lying in their own urine or feces.”” (<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08713t.pdf>)

In response to this sort of reported abuse, bills have been introduced into Congress on a number of occasions over the past ten years. The most recent, H.R.3060, the Stop Child Abuse in Residential Programs for Teens Act of 2015, was introduced into the House of Representatives on November 15, 2015. New Mexico’s House Memorial 52 would express the sense of our House of Representative that legislation of this sort should be supported.

## ALTERNATIVES

Legislation specific to the industry in New Mexico could be enacted.

LAC/al/jo