

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current FIRs (in HTML & Adobe PDF formats) are available on the NM Legislative Website (legis.state.nm.us). Adobe PDF versions include all attachments, whereas HTML versions may not. Previously issued FIRs and attachments may be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/22/07

SPONSOR B. Sanchez LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE “Character Counts Day” SM 36

ANALYST Hanika Ortiz

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Memorial 36 requests that the six pillars of character as defined in the bill be endorsed through this memorial; that all state and local government employees incorporate these values into their work; that all citizens model these traits of good character; and, provides for “Character Counts Day” in the New Mexico State Senate.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

NFI.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The memorial provides for the following:

- Young people will be the stewards of our communities, nation and world in critical times, and the present and future well-being of our society requires an involved, caring citizenry with good character.
- Concerns about the character training of children have taken on a new sense of urgency as violence by and against youth threatens the physical and psychological well-being of the nation.
- More than ever, children need strong and constructive guidance from their families and their communities, including schools, youth organizations, religious institutions and civic groups.

- The character of a nation is only as strong as the character of its individual citizens, and the public good is advanced when young people are taught that good character counts in personal relationships, in school and in the workplace.
- Scholars and educators agree that people do not automatically develop good character and; therefore, conscientious efforts must be made by youth-influencing institutions and individuals to help young people develop the essential traits and characteristics that constitute good character.
- Character development is, first and foremost, an obligation of families, but efforts by faith communities, schools and youth, civic and human service organizations also play a very important role in supporting families by fostering and promoting good character.
- In July 1992, the Aspen declaration was written by an eminent group of educators, youth leaders and ethics scholars for the purpose of articulating a coherent framework for character education appropriate to diverse and pluralistic society.
- The Aspen Declaration states that “effective character education is based on core ethical values which form the foundation of democratic society”; trustworthiness, respects, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship are six pillars of character that transcend cultural, religious and socioeconomic difficulties.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

If passed, the New Mexico State Senate will declare Thursday, March 15, 2007, as “Character Counts Day” in the Senate with copies of the memorial transmitted to the Governor and the New Mexico Municipal League for distribution.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The memorial further resolves that all state and local government employees be urged to seek out opportunities to incorporate these core ethical values into their work with young people in park and recreation activities, child care programs, community events and intern and employee training; and, that all citizens be encouraged to model these traits of good character in an ongoing commitment to promote character development and ethical behavior in the youth of our community.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

In July 1992, the Josephson Institute of Ethics hosted a summit conference in Aspen, Colorado. A diverse group of ethicists, educators and youth-service professionals convened to find ways to work together and boost their character-education efforts. The declaration that concluded this meeting would form the intellectual foundation for the CHARACTER COUNTS! movement, started by the Institute the following year.

QUESTIONS

How many Character Counts programs are within the State?
Is the Character Counts program a Christian-based faith organization?

AHO/mt