# F I S C A L   I M P A C T   R E P O R T

|  |  | **ORIGINAL DATE** | 01/31/08 |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **SPONSOR** | Sanchez, B. | **LAST UPDATED** |  | **HB** |  |
| **SHORT TITLE** | "Character Counts Day" |  |  | **SM** | 14 |
|  |  |  | **ANALYST** | Padilla |  |

**SOURCES OF INFORMATION**
LFC Files

**SUMMARY**

   Synopsis of Bill

Senate Memorial 14 resolves that Friday, February 1, 2008 is declared as "Character Counts Day" in the Senate. SM 14 further resolves as follows:

- that the six pillars of character be endorsed;
- 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 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; and
- that copies of this Memorial be transmitted to the governor and the New Mexico Municipal League.

**SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

SM 14 proposes 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; and
- 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; and
- More than ever, children need strong and constructive guidance from their families and their communities, including schools, youth organizations, religious institutions and civic groups; and
- 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; and

- 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; and

- 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; and

- 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 a diverse and pluralistic society; and

- The Aspen Declaration states that "effective character education is based on core ethical values which form the foundation of democratic society;" trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship are six pillars of character that transcend cultural, religious and socioeconomic difficulties; and

- The Aspen Declaration further states that "The character and conduct of our youth reflect the character and conduct of society; therefore, every adult has the responsibility to promote the development of good character."

## WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Representatives, visitors, citizens of the State of New Mexico, and all state and local government employees will not be able to engage in the six pillars of character in celebration of "Character Counts Day" as the bill proposes and as it is urged by the New Mexico's State Senate.

JRP/bb