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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 03/10/09

SPONSOR Wallace LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HJM 82

SHORT TITLE Better Hearing and Speech Month SB \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYST C. Sanchez

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY09	FY10		
	NFI		

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD)  
 New Mexico Health Policy Commission (NMHPC)  
 Department of Health (DOH)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Joint Memorial 82 requests that the Governor designate the month of May as “Better Hearing and Speech Month.”

HJM82 recognizes the following:

- 14 million Americans suffer speech, language and hearing impairments that can limit academic achievement, career advancement and social adjustment for those who do not receive treatment.
- Communication disorders can be present at birth or caused through accident or injury.
- 1 in 10 families in New Mexico are affected by this disorder.
- New Mexicans deserve access to treatment and opportunity.

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- Skilled professionals can help people with these problems.
- Speech-language pathologists and audiologists treat all types of related disorders in a wide variety of health and education settings.

### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

According to the Health Policy Commission, the month of May has been “Better Hearing and Speech Month” at the national level since 1927. HJM 82 would assign May in New Mexico as a time to raise public awareness, knowledge and understanding of the various forms of communication impairments and the services and treatments available.

According to the Health Policy Commission, communication impairments affect the most vulnerable members of New Mexico -- the young, the aged, the disabled, and the poor. These impairments impact approximately one in ten families in New Mexico.

“Better Hearing and Speech Month” would also be a time to recognize the significant contribution of audiologists and speech language pathologists and their work to enrich the lives of people affected by communication disorders.

According to NMHPC, an estimated 100,000 New Mexicans have some type of communication disorder, with economic costs exceeding \$7 million due to lost work productivity, special education, and medical treatment. These disorders can be present at birth or result from injury or illness at any age.

- In 2006, 41 newborns in New Mexico were diagnosed with moderate to severed hearing loss as a result of newborn hearing screening according to the Department of Health.
- Approximately 10% of children have moderate to severe communication impairments. With proper treatment and early intervention, most children affected can lead full and productive lives.
- Almost 60,000 New Mexicans suffer from hearing loss that can be treated. Yet fewer than 25% have a hearing aid.
- Fifteen percent of Americans between the ages of 20 and 69—or 26 million Americans—have high frequency hearing loss that may have been caused by exposure to loud sounds or noise at work or in leisure activities. This is preventable hearing loss.
- An estimated 6,800 persons in New Mexico have aphasia – a language disorder resulting from brain damage caused by a stroke.
- Hearing loss is the number one physical disability for military personnel returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Sixty percent of U.S. personnel exposed to blasts suffer permanent hearing loss and forty nine percent also suffer from tinnitus.

### **CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

Related to HM51, which proclaims March 13, 2009 as “New Mexico Speech-Language and Hearing Association Day” at the House of Representatives.

**OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

According to the Department of Health, there are long-term impacts of early speech, language and communication difficulties. Speech, language and communication difficulties can have a profound and lasting effect on children's lives. For a small percentage of children, their disability cannot be prevented, but early intervention is just as vital as for those with less severe difficulties to help give a child the best possible support that they need. The impact of these difficulties will vary according to the severity of the problem, the support the child receives, the child's confidence and the demands of the child's environment.

Young children with speech and language impairments are at risk for continued communication problems, as well as for associated cognitive, academic, behavioral, social and psychiatric difficulties (Bashir & Scavuzzo, 1992). The initial pattern of speech and/or language deficits is related to overall prognosis. Children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI) have been reported to experience concurrent difficulties in the area of social and behavioral development (Redmond & Rice, 1998). This has often been thought to arise from such factors as frustration, peer rejection, and lack of confidence in the face of poor linguistic skills.

HJM82 would proclaim the month of May as "Better Hearing and Speech Month." According to DOH, this memorial would provide an avenue to raise awareness to these important health issues.

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

The people of the State of New Mexico will not have the opportunity to recognize the importance of these disorders, not will they have the chance to honor those who help our citizens with these treatable disorders.

CS/svb