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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

	ORIGINAL DATE 1/29/08		
SPONSOR	<u>Lujan, B</u>	LAST UPDATED	HM <u>36</u>
SHORT TITLE	<u>Requesting the New Mexico Congressional Delegation to introduce legislation to award Dr. Victor Westphall a Congressional Gold Medal</u>	SB	<u></u>
		ANALYST	<u>Shaya</u>

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Memorial 36 requests that the New Mexico Congressional Delegation introduce legislation to award Dr. Victor Westphall a Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of his service to the United States and that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the members of the New Mexico congressional delegation and to Governor Richardson.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

- In order to honor those who fought and died in the Vietnam war, and to give the survivors a spiritual home, Dr. Victor Westphall built the Vietnam veterans peace and brotherhood chapel, which would later become the Vietnam veterans national memorial state park at Angel Fire; and
- In building the Vietnam veterans peace and brotherhood chapel, Dr. Westphall honored the courage and sacrifice of his own son, Victor David Westphall, III, who gave his life in the Vietnam war; and
- Dr. Westphall built the Vietnam veterans peace and brotherhood chapel in 1968, a period in which the nation was divided over the war being fought by the United States in Vietnam; and
- Americans in 1968 were deeply divided over the Vietnam war, while the soldiers returning from the Vietnam war were often shunned and scapegoated as blameworthy for the United States' policies in southeast Asia; and
- In being the first to build a memorial honoring those who had fallen in the service of their country, Dr. Westphall bravely made a stand in the name of honor during a time of great social unrest; and

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- The congressional gold medal is the nation's most distinguished award given to civilians, and it is an honor befitting Dr. Westphall's acts of outstanding principle, courage and service in building the Vietnam veterans peace and brotherhood chapel;

RS/bb