

1 SJR61
2 159112-1
3 By Senators Orr, Pittman, Allen, Hightower, Bussman, Taylor,
4 Scofield, Williams and Marsh
5 RFD:
6 First Read: 25-FEB-14

8 ALABAMA, THE STATE OF CHARACTER.
9

10 WHEREAS, in 1995, the Legislature acknowledged our
11 nation's history and the importance of teaching and promoting
12 character principles in order to develop a successful
13 workforce and citizenry by including the Alabama Character
14 Education Mandate in the Education Reform Act of that year
15 (Act 95-313), requiring public schools to teach all students
16 26 character traits for no less than 10 minutes each day; and

17 WHEREAS, the people of Alabama recognized the
18 importance of citizens with honorable character qualities
19 based upon the moral standards upon which our nation and legal
20 system are established; and

21 WHEREAS, we desire to build upon our heritage in
22 making Alabama a place where families are strong, homes and
23 streets are safe, education is effective, business is
24 productive, neighbors care about one another, and citizens are
25 free to make wise choices for their lives and families; and

26 WHEREAS, we recognize that individuals are
27 responsible for their actions and that daily decisions should

1 be based upon sound timeless values that are the basis of
2 universally recognized character qualities, including
3 kindness, courage, loyalty, diligence, generosity,
4 truthfulness, honesty, and obedience; and

5 WHEREAS, irresponsibility and a lack of commitment
6 to these values have resulted in an increasing number of
7 family problems causing personal, social, and financial
8 consequences to individual family members and to society as a
9 whole; and

10 WHEREAS, when people fail to demonstrate positive
11 character qualities or make poor moral choices, the health,
12 safety, and welfare of the citizens are endangered, resulting
13 in financial burden upon the taxpayers for the costs of lower
14 productivity and increased social services and law
15 enforcement; many current societal problems will be alleviated
16 when citizens live by positive and constructive character
17 qualities that distinguish between right and wrong, and it has
18 been shown that teaching and reinforcing positive character
19 qualities to juvenile delinquents produces a change of
20 behavior, reducing recidivism rates; and

21 WHEREAS, our prisons far exceed planned capacity and
22 there is a need for more positive role models among our young
23 people to discourage juvenile delinquency and for these
24 individuals to understand those qualities that have made our
25 country strong and prosperous; and

1 WHEREAS, our schools should be safe climates in
2 which character is exemplified, taught, and strengthened, and
3 learning is encouraged; and

4 WHEREAS, encouraging employees by recognizing
5 positive character qualities has resulted in an increase in
6 workplace morale, employee safety, and corporate profits; such
7 action is essential as Alabama competes for 21st Century jobs
8 with states in which character is emphasized; and

9 WHEREAS, presidents throughout our nation's history
10 have promoted character principles and have encouraged
11 character education as a high priority for America's schools;
12 many other highly regarded civic leaders have extolled
13 character as among the qualities by which all people should be
14 judged; and

15 WHEREAS, the Alabama Legislature must deal with the
16 challenge of allocating and stretching very limited resources
17 very far, because of education and social needs; and

18 WHEREAS, the Alabama Legislature has repeatedly
19 appealed through its approving "Alabama, a State of Character"
20 resolutions in 2000, 2005, and 2008, and the Alabama House in
21 2011; and

22 WHEREAS, the Alabama Legislature again appeals for
23 character-building strategies to be promoted in a
24 collaborative way by partners, and we as Alabama lawmakers
25 again appeal for there to be creative efforts to support and
26 promote practical and affordable strategies for this state

1 which will help Alabama to take the lead with the "States of
2 Character" movement; now therefore,

3 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
4 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That we reaffirm our 2000, 2005,
5 and 2008 declarations of Alabama as a State of Character, and
6 appeal to partners to collaborate when developing and
7 supporting the implementation of character building
8 strategies. We pledge to do all in our power to promote this
9 Alabama, The State of Character resolution and character
10 education in our schools, businesses, homes, churches, local
11 governments, state agencies, and media and community groups,
12 and we urge leaders of each of these areas to do likewise.