

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.C.R. 38
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Administration
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

S.C.R. 38 serves to designate the City of Abilene as the Storybook Capital of Texas. In 1996, the National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature was established as a nonprofit organization. The organization is the only museum in Texas that exclusively collects artwork from award-winning children's books and hosts nearly one million visitors each year. Additionally, the City of Abilene is home to an extensive collection of bronze statues and outdoor sculptures in the likeness of characters from children's storybook classics. Abilene's Storybook Sculpture Project, thought to be the largest project of its kind in any city, has led to the Abilene Cultural Affairs Council to commission a total of 23 pieces to be dedicated annually at the Children's Art & Literacy Festival and later placed throughout the city. By promoting what is a cherished childhood experience, Abilene's efforts have made the city a must-see destination for readers of all ages. S.C.R. 38 honors the City of Abilene's past and continued efforts in promoting childhood literacy and would assist the city with future economic development efforts.

For countless young readers, books open a window to a realm of imagination and possibility, and in recent years, the city of Abilene has undertaken a series of unique efforts to showcase the wonders of children's literature. Abilene is the home of the National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature, the only museum in Texas that exclusively collects artwork from best-selling, award-winning children's book illustrators. Established in 1996, the center has curated and toured nearly 60 exhibits in close to 40 states, which are enjoyed by one million people every year. Further adding to the city's whimsical charm is its extensive collection of outdoor sculptures based on characters from children's classics. While walking the length of Everman Park, visitors can encounter bronze statues in the likeness of Dr. Seuss's creations, and heroes from the works of author-illustrators William Joyce and David Shannon are brought to life in locations throughout the city. Young explorers can also receive a "passport" to help them find Seymour, the character from Walter Wick's *Can You See What I See?* books, who is hidden at several arts and cultural landmarks.

In total, 23 pieces have been commissioned by the Abilene Cultural Affairs Council as part of its Storybook Sculpture Project, thought to be the largest endeavor of its kind in any city. Each year, new additions to the project are dedicated at the Children's Art & Literary Festival, a popular annual celebration that includes family-friendly activities throughout downtown Abilene. The festival is a collaborative effort of schools, libraries, churches, civic groups, and city leaders, drawing crowds of thousands from across the state and nation. Literary works for children hold a cherished place on the bookshelves of Texas families, and the true greats of the genre weave captivating tales with dazzling artwork that is fondly remembered for a lifetime. By embracing and promoting an essential experience of childhood, residents of Abilene have established a delightful tradition for young and old alike, and their efforts have made the community a must-see destination for readers of all ages.

RESOLVED

That the 84th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby designate the city of Abilene as the official Storybook Capital of Texas.

That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 391.003(e) (providing that a place designation expires on the 10th anniversary of its designation), Government Code, this designation remain in effect until the 10th anniversary of its designation.

That the children of our great state live happily ever after.