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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Gonzales LAST UPDATED 2/21/2025
ORIGINAL DATE 2/19/2025
BILL
SHORT TITLE UNM-Taos Observatory NUMBER Senate Bill 394
ANALYST Jorgensen

APPROPRIATION* (dollars in thousands)

FY25	FY26	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
	\$1,500.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.

*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency Analysis Received From
Higher Education Department (HED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Senate Bill 394

Senate Bill 394 appropriates \$1.5 million from the general fund to the University of New Mexico Taos branch campus for the purpose of preparation, construction, equipping, furnishing, and landscaping for an on-campus observatory.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns if enacted, or June 20, 2025.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$1.5 million contained in this bill is a nonrecurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY29 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

UNM-Taos received a donation of an \$83 thousand, 36-inch diameter, 12-foot, 6-inch tall Dobsonian telescope, the largest public-use telescope in New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado, and among the largest in the country. UNM-Taos estimated the total project cost to be \$13.5 million construct an observatory facility to house the telescope. HED recommended \$5.5 million and the LFC recommendation did not include additional funding for the project.

CJ/hj/SL2