

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 245

51st Legislature, 2nd Session, 2014

Tracking Number: .195658.1

Short Title: African American Science & Math Bridge Pgm

Sponsor(s): Representative Jane E. Powdrell-Culbert

Analyst: James Ball

Date: February 6, 2014

Bill Summary:

HB 245 makes an appropriation to support the student services science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) African American Summer Bridge Program (AASBP) at the University of New Mexico (UNM).

Fiscal Impact:

\$350,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Board of Regents of UNM for expenditure in FY 15. Unexpended or unencumbered funds revert to the General Fund.

Fiscal Issues:

According to the Higher Education Department (HED), this request was not submitted by UNM to HED for budget review.

Substantive Issues:

HED states that HB 245 seeks to remedy an imbalance in the numbers of African-American students entering the academic STEM fields through the creation of the AASBP at UNM. AASBP is intended to prepare African-American students for the rigors of a STEM-education program during the subsequent fall semester and beyond.

Background:

According to HED, in recent years, a significant number of articles and studies have appeared that encourage greater African-American representation in postsecondary institutional programs in the STEM fields. These studies have revealed that a disproportionately low number of African-American students were taking STEM courses even at historically black colleges and universities.

HED further notes that where a concerted effort by university leadership to encourage African-American involvement in STEM programs has been implemented, the numbers of African-American graduates going on to master's and doctorate programs in STEM subjects significantly increases.

Committee Referrals:

HEC/HAFC

Related Bills:

HB 166 *Albuquerque School Black Student Union*
HJM 16 *Higher Ed Faculty Underrepresentation*