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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Papen ORIGINAL DATE 1/27/16
LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE NM Center for Autism Research SB 112

ANALYST Dulany

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY16	FY17		
	\$359.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Senate Bill 62

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Research and Public Service Project Requests

Responses Received From

Department of Health (DOH)

Higher Education Department (HED)

New Mexico State University (NMSU)

Human Services Department (HSD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 112 appropriates \$359 thousand from the general fund to NMSU for expenditure in FY17 and subsequent fiscal years to support the New Mexico Center for Autism Research, Testing, Training and Intervention. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund.

NMSU indicates the appropriation of \$359 thousand is sufficient to support the proposed scope of work for this project, which includes recruitment of one faculty member and provision of appropriate space for the program. The university also indicates the involvement of clinicians and NMSU investigators. It appears the funds contained in SB 112 will also support outreach efforts to contact those in need of services under the project.

According to NMSU, SB 112 provides funds for a new project – a “center for autism research, testing, training and intervention” – to be established at NMSU to address significant needs related to autism in southern New Mexico. The project will develop in three phases: 1) a six-month planning phase; 2) an 18 month initial implementation phase; and 3) a long-term maintenance and continuous improvement phase. As a result, the institution notes this project will require recurring funding. According to NMSU, the initial phase of the program involves assessment of 25 children.

According to DOH, Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) training, evaluations, and intervention are currently funded through the DOH to the University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability (UNM-CDD). Current funding to UNM-CDD for autism services is \$3.1 million, according to DOH.

According to HSD, individuals with autism who are enrolled in Medicaid would be entitled to medically necessary, evidence-based testing and intervention services through the new Medicaid service Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) in addition to comprehensive medical care and behavioral health services. HSD further notes Medicaid treatment funds are matched at about 70 percent federal, 30 percent state.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

In its FY17 research and public service project request, NMSU indicated a large number of parents, physicians, and educators are uninformed or misinformed regarding appropriate identification and management of ASD. The university suggests it is possible that the stated ratio of 1 in 64 children with autism may be lower in rural communities of southern New Mexico due to a lack of information, delayed diagnosis, or missed diagnoses in addition to limited access to care. NMSU states the center will train students of all levels (undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral) in multiple fields (teaching, counseling, speech-language pathology, psychology, and social work) in the area of autism and provide education to the community.

According to a UNM agency analysis for a related bill, Senate Bill 62, the UNM-CDD currently has wait times for inter or multidisciplinary team diagnostic evaluations of six to nine months for children birth to five years of age and 12 to 18 months for children older than 5 years of age.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

NMSU’s research and public service project request for the Center for Autism Research Training, Testing, and Treatment included four proposed performance measures:

1. identify a team of professionals to manage the autism center (target: 6 professionals);
2. outreach to parents, care providers, and teachers across southern New Mexico for autism evaluations (target: 500 contacts);
3. provide autism screening tool training to 20 professionals (target: 2,000 screenings); and
4. recruit teachers and students for participation in autism programs (target: 10 students).