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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Ortiz y Pino **ORIGINAL DATE** _____
LAST UPDATED 2/12/16 **HB** _____

SHORT TITLE Behavioral Health Apprenticeship Project **SB** 169

ANALYST Chilton

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY16	FY17		
	\$500.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act
 Relates to HB 2, Section 4J, Higher Education, appropriation to the New Mexico Highlands University

Duplicates SB 67 in its entirety

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From
 Higher Education Department (HED)
 Human Services Department (HSD)
 Department of Health (DOH)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

SB 67 would appropriate \$500.0 to New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU) to create a statewide research and demonstration program, through behavioral health treatment apprenticeships, to provide behavioral health treatment services to indigent persons (those with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level) who do not have health insurance or Medicaid or Medicare coverage. NMHU is to contract with a behavioral health association that will employ individuals from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds who are under-represented in the behavioral health workforce to provide services under the project.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Any unexpended balances remaining at the end of FY17 would revert to the general fund.

The Higher Education Department indicates that the funding in SB 67 was not proposed by NMHU or reviewed by HED through the formal process for higher education research and public service projects, and the funding proposed in the bill is not included in the LFC recommendation.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The bill would provide unspecified levels of services to the target population indicated. A significant need exists for extensive mental health and substance abuse treatment services among many of the indigent population who are not enrolled in a health insurance program, including Medicaid. Many individuals in this population group refuse government or third party insurance coverage; live “off the grid” in homeless shelters, camps, abandoned buildings, and other substandard conditions; and suffer from mental health afflictions, substance abuse, and related physical health maladies associated with and resulting from their living conditions and behavioral health afflictions. Funding under the legislation could address and begin to alleviate the behavioral and physical health issues experienced by this population given the lack of insurance coverage that could provide for these services.

Under the federal Affordable Care Act, all adults are required to be enrolled in a health insurance program. Any individuals served by this proposed program that are not enrolled in a health insurance program should be referred to the Human Services Department for determination of eligibility under the Medicaid program.

The Human Services Department (HSD) indicates that the Behavioral Health Collaborative has efforts underway to create a mechanism for paying interns who operate under appropriate clinical supervision in provider agencies; that the bill’s efforts might be duplicative of these efforts; and that it would be important to identify and avoid those conflicts if the bill is enacted.

The Department of Health (DOH) reports that behavioral health services that are culturally and linguistically diverse, both by workforce participation and training, may increase the use and the success of such services.

LAC/al/jle