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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Thomson ORIGINAL DATE 01/25/20
LAST UPDATED _____ HB 56
SHORT TITLE Behavioral Health Licensure Study SB _____
ANALYST Daly

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY20	FY21		
	\$200.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD)

Human Services Department (HSD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 56 requires Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD) conduct a study of the requirements for licensure of behavioral-health-related professionals by four boards: the counseling and therapy practice board, the board of examiners for occupational therapy, the board of psychologist examiners and the board of social work examiners. Each board's licensing practices are to be evaluated, including (a) a comparative analysis of initial and renewal licensure requirements as imposed by similar boards or commissions in every other state; (b) identification of licensure requirements that are unique to New Mexico and not imposed by other identified states which could be eliminated or lessened to make licensing easier and more efficient; (c) identification of existing interstate compacts providing for reciprocity or a similar system which these boards could join; and (d) recommendations for improving each board's licensing and renewal processes. RLD must report its findings and recommendations to each board by January 1, 2021, and to the legislative health and human services committee, including recommended executive and legislative actions, by October 1, 2021.

Section 2 of HB 56 appropriates \$200 thousand from the general fund to RLD for expenditure in FYs 21 and 22 for the purpose of conducting the study required in Section 1.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$200 thousand contained in this bill is a nonrecurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY 2022 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

HSD advises that occupational therapy, one of the professions included in this licensing study, is not generally considered to have significant impact on the behavioral health workforce; the reason for its inclusion in this study is unclear. Further, the department notes that while study of comparable licensing requirements from other states may be beneficial, recommendations for reforming New Mexico's behavioral health licensing practices should also reflect consistency with national standards.

RLD expresses concern that the bill does not provide enough time to allow the department to conduct a proper procurement to select a contractor, or locate a statewide price agreement contractor who is available, and for a contractor so procured or selected to conduct the study and provide the necessary reports by the dates contained in the bill, which it estimates would give the contractor only five months following the contractor's procurement or selection.

AMENDMENTS

RLD recommends a one-year delay in reporting dates to allow adequate time for procurement or otherwise selecting a contractor, and for the contractor to perform the study and make its reports. As amended, RLD would, through its contractor, report to the identified boards by January 1, 2022, and to the specified legislative committee by Oct. 1, 2022. Such an amendment likely would require additional authorization to expend the appropriated funds in FY 23.

MD/rl