

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current and previously issued FIRs are available on the NM Legislative Website (www.nmlegis.gov).

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Trujillo, J. ORIGINAL DATE 2/12/2020
LAST UPDATED 2/19/2020 HB 300
SHORT TITLE SF Community College Veteran Legacy Program SB _____
ANALYST Chilton

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY20	FY21		
	\$100.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)
Veterans' Services Department (VSD)
Santa Fe Community College (SFCC)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 300 appropriates \$100 thousand from the general fund to the Higher Education Department for the purpose of funding a veterans' legacy program in the Veterans' Resource Center at Santa Fe Community College.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$100 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of each fiscal year) shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

HED shares information from the Santa Fe Community College's Veterans' Resource Center (<https://www.sfcc.edu/offices/veterans-resource-center/>), as follows:

The Veterans Resource Center at SFCC provides numerous services to veterans, which include the following:

- Information about regional Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs)
- Assistance with VA Education Benefit Enrollment
- DD 214 retrieval
- Advocacy for increasing veterans benefits
- Computer lab & study area
- Work-study placement
- Veteran-to-veteran mentoring and support
- Community outreach opportunities
- Scholarship information

The center is open to the public and is committed to providing the best customer service to all veterans and their families.

As proposed, funding appropriated in HB300 would be utilized to memorialize veterans via a veteran's legacy program. The program would gather and preserve the stories of service and sacrifices by servicemen and servicewomen.

The Veterans' Services Department indicates that its "staff can assist the legacy program personnel with obtaining deceased veterans' information that is stored in our public kiosk. This information is public record and contains the veteran's active duty service component and the veterans date of death and grave site location. This information is stored on site at all state veterans' cemeteries. The impact to NMDVS staff will be minimal."

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

HED notes that "As set forth in HB300, the NMHED will administer these funds involving receipt, disbursement, and tracking to SFCC for expenditure towards a veteran's legacy program."

SFCC notes that "Santa Fe Community College Veterans Service Center personnel propose to partner with appropriate professionals in the college and the greater community to perform the tasks associated with production of the Veterans' Legacy Program – sharing stories of service and sacrifice. The SFCC Veterans Service Center would hire or contract with appropriate personnel as required to carry out the requirements and achieve the deliverables noted in HB 300."

TECHNICAL ISSUES

HED points out that "guidance is not provided in HB300 as to how funds would revert when it is appropriated to NMHED then issued to SFCC if there are remaining funds at the end of the fiscal year. SFCC may have to return it to NMHED, who in turn would return it to the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA), or SFCC may have to return unexpended, unencumbered funds directly to DFA."

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Veterans' stories and memories of their efforts during past wars may be lost and unavailable to succeeding generations.