

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](http://www.nmlegis.gov)).

## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Pinto ORIGINAL DATE 02/02/2020  
LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB \_\_\_\_\_  
SHORT TITLE Shiprock John Pinto Library Internet Access SB 215  
ANALYST Gelay

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY20	FY21		
	\$494.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### No Response Received

Higher Education Department (HED)

Public Education Department (PED)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 214 appropriates \$494 thousand from the general fund to the Higher Education Department for the purpose of supporting Diné College to provide internet access to the Senator John Pinto library in Shiprock.

There is no effective date of this bill. It is assumed that the effective date is 90 days following adjournment of the Legislature.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$494 thousand contained in this bill is a nonrecurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY21 shall revert to the general fund.

It should be noted that, while the expense for establishing internet access is nonrecurring, there will be recurring fiscal implications to the general fund for maintaining internet access. However, maintenance costs are assumed to be minimal.

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

Libraries play an important role in literacy and in supporting individuals to overcome challenges to access information and opportunities. According to the U.S. Census, nearly 23 percent of Americans do not have access to the internet in their homes. In rural areas like Shiprock, where broadband connections are not easily brought into personal residences, it is crucial to support establishing free internet access in places accessible to community members. Every year technology's role in society is growing. It is becoming necessary, for youth and adults alike, to have access to the internet in order to complete homework assignments, seek educational and employment opportunities, and stay updated on current events.

A lack of internet access, also called the “digital divide,” can lead to skills gaps that span generations. Libraries have traditionally played an important role in bridging informational divides, and they continue to do so by providing access to the internet to individuals in the communities they serve.

JGG/sb