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LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS
56th Legislature, 1st Session, 2023

Bill Number	<u>HB145</u>	Sponsor	<u>Nibert/Ezzell/Pettigrew</u>
Tracking Number	<u>.223287.1</u>	Committee Referrals	<u>HGEIC/HEC</u>
Short Title	<u>NMMI Legislative Scholarship Program</u>		
Analyst	<u>Hathaway</u>	Original Date	<u>1/28/2023</u>
		Last Updated	<u></u>

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 145 (HB145) would amend Section 21-12-13 NMSA 1978, which covers the General R.T. Knowles Legislative Scholarship, to remove the scholarship term limit of four years. The proposed changes would allow the Knowles Legislative Scholarship to be awarded for the New Mexico Military Institute's fifth and sixth year students that are attending NMMI for its' junior college program.

FISCAL IMPACT

HB145 does not contain an appropriation.

The Higher Education Department (HED) reports NMMI has a general fund recurring appropriation for the Knowles Legislative Scholarship. For FY24, the HED, Department of Finance and Administration (DFA), and LFC recommendations concur on continuing to fund the Knowles Legislative Scholarship from the general fund in the amount of \$1.34 million.

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

About New Mexico Military Institute. The New Mexico Military Institute (NMMI) was established in 1891 as a public military college in Roswell, New Mexico. NMMI enrolls nearly 1,000 cadets at the high school and junior college levels each year. Students from around the world attend NMMI with the school enrolling students from 45 states, 2 U.S. territories, and 35 foreign nations. NMMI is distinct in that it enrolls students both at the secondary (high school) and postsecondary (junior college) levels. A student could enroll at NMMI for six consecutive years if they attended for both high school and junior college. NMMI's junior college program provides a comprehensive liberal arts and science curriculum.

Enrollment and Cost Implications. In its analysis of HB145, NMMI notes its' academic limit is six years for students who attend NMMI for both high school and junior college. NMMI also notes it has a policy that limits the age of any student to not exceed 22 years of age during the academic

year and fewer than 10 percent of NMMI students are fifth or sixth year students that are also New Mexico residents. NMMI also notes the current four year scholarship term limit creates a financial burden for students who wish to stay at NMMI but cannot afford to.

While HB145 does not contain an appropriation, if the allowable term of the scholarship was extended, the fund would need to support additional awards for students to receive scholarships in their fifth and sixth years of attendance. LFC reports that at a FY23 hearing, NMMI reported the current \$1.35 million appropriation has not sufficiently met the school's initial intent to cover a minimum of 50 percent of funding for each recipient. NMMI is currently covering roughly 40 percent of student costs for those who receive the scholarship. At this same hearing, NMMI requested a funding increase to \$1.76 million to cover each year's costs at its goal of 50 percent of funding for scholarship recipients.

NMMI Attendance Costs. For in-state students attending NMMI in the 2022–2023 school year, tuition at NMMI is \$1,000 but after adding in rooming, boarding, and additional fees, the [total cost](#) to attend for an in-state student is \$9,579 for the student's first semester and \$6,587 for their returning semester.

Knowles Legislative Scholarship. The General Richard T. Knowles Legislative Scholarship program, which was created in 1989, allows each of New Mexico's 112 legislators to nominate a student from their legislative district for scholarship consideration. If a legislator has not nominated a student and their district is considered "open," the scholarship may be awarded to non-selected applicants. Currently, the scholarship may be awarded for up to four years. The Knowles Legislative Scholarship requires applicants to be a New Mexico resident, to have a minimum grade point average as determined by the NMMI Board of Regents, to submit a letter of recommendation from a teacher, and to apply for admission to NMMI or to be a current cadet in good standing.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

NMMI's Board of Regents would be responsible for administering scholarship funds, however NMMI does not indicate administrative implications as it already has a process for awarding the scholarship that could be extended to fifth and sixth year students.

In its analysis of HB145, NMMI does not indicate a need for additional funds and reports that through both the loss of students through attrition and the overall fund balance of the Knowles Scholarship fund, costs could be covered for fifth and sixth year scholarship recipients.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- LESC Files
- LFC Files
- New Mexico Military Institute
- Higher Education Department

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