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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

LAST UPDATED _____
ORIGINAL DATE 1/22/25

SPONSOR Garcia

BILL
NUMBER House Bill 24

SHORT TITLE Community Governance Attorneys Changes

ANALYST Jorgensen

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT* (dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY25	FY26	FY27	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
CGA	No fiscal impact	No fiscal impact	No fiscal impact	\$0	Recurring	General Fund
Total	No fiscal impact	No fiscal impact	No fiscal impact	\$0	Recurring	General Fund

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.
*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency Analysis Received From
University of New Mexico (UNM)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Bill 24

House Bill 24 (HB24) amends the current Community Governance Attorney Act. The Act currently authorizes a tuition waiver program for law students working as community governance attorneys for small political subdivisions and unincorporated communities. HB24 makes the following changes to the program:

- The responsibility for advertising the program to students would change from the Higher Education Department to the University of New Mexico (UNM) School of Law.
- The responsibility for administering contracts with legal service providers would change from the Community Governance Attorney Commission to the UNM School of Law.
- The responsibility for selecting the students who participate in the program would change from the Higher Education Department to the Community Governance Attorney Commission.
- The definition of eligible legal service providers would be expanded to include state agencies.
- The cost-share requirement for the legal service providers would be changed to allow them to utilize state funding for the cost-share.

The effective date of this bill is July 1, 2025.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

HB24 does not have a fiscal impact because the bill does not contain an appropriation nor does it obligate an increase in the number of tuition waivers to be awarded. The bill does remove a requirement that entities entering contracts for community governance attorneys provide matching funds from nonstate sources. Removing this requirement will allow state funds to be used for these contracts but does not require additional state appropriations. UNM reports no additional budgetary impact associated with implementing the potential changes in HB24.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

UNM notes several benefits of the bill, such as improving program administration efficiency by allowing UNM to advertise the program to students and relieving the Community Governance Attorney Commission of the responsibility of administering contracts for the program. Additionally, the bill would place selection of community governance attorney participants under the purview of the board.

CJ/hj/SL2