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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

LAST UPDATED _____

SPONSOR Lara/Chávez, E. **ORIGINAL DATE** 3/3/2025

BILL

SHORT TITLE Homeless Student Liaison **NUMBER** House Bill 537

ANALYST Jorgensen

APPROPRIATION* (dollars in thousands)

FY25	FY26	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
	\$500.0	Recurring	General Fund

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

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT* (dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY25	FY26	FY27	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Higher Ed. Institutions	No fiscal impact	\$700.0	\$700.0	\$1,400.0	Recurring	General Fund

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

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency Analysis Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

New Mexico Independent Community Colleges (NMICC)

New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (NM Tech)

University of New Mexico (UNM)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Bill 537

House Bill 537 (HB537) requires all four-year higher education institutions to designate a full-time staff member to act as a liaison for students experiencing homelessness. The liaison shall be tasked with identifying and contacting students who are or are at risk of homelessness and assisting those students with completing applications for financial aid as well as providing other services such as managing coursework. The bill requires each liaison to publish training materials to help faculty and staff recognize homelessness as well as describing resources available. The bill also requires HED to work with the New Mexico basic needs consortium to provide training to liaisons and administer an annual survey of students experiencing homelessness.

HB537 appropriates \$500 thousand from the general fund to HED to provide training to higher education liaisons, faculty, and staff regarding students experiencing homelessness.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns if enacted, or June 20, 2025.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$500 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY26 shall revert to the general fund.

The University of New Mexico estimates the salary and benefits cost would be approximately \$100 thousand per institution per year. There are seven constitutional higher education institutions affected, bringing the total annual cost to \$700 thousand as reflected in the estimated additional operating budget table.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

For the past three consecutive years, the Legislature has included additional funding to higher education institutions for student support services. “Support services” in the budget is not defined and could include supports for students experiencing homelessness. How student support funding is used depends on the decisions made by each institution.

HB537 applies only to four-year colleges and excludes branch and community colleges.

CJ/hj