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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR: Aragon DATE TYPED: 03/08/01 HB _____
 SHORT TITLE: Digital Transmitters & Transmission Equipment SB 585
 ANALYST: Gilbert/Rael

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY01	FY02	FY01	FY02		
	\$ 2,300.0			See Narrative	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates House Bill 44
 Relates to Senate Joint Memorial 3

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files
 Commission for Higher Education (CHE)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 585 appropriates \$2.3 million from the general fund to the Educational Television Equipment Replacement Fund to provide digital equipment at the state's three public television stations: KNME-TV (Albuquerque), KENW-TV (Portales) and KRWG-TV (Las Cruces). This appropriation would allow completion of phase one of the digital conversion project for the State's three public television stations.

Significant Issues

New Mexico's three public television stations comprise a statewide television system providing free over-the-air programs of public interest at all levels of education for the people of New Mexico. Enhanced digital television equipment will allow the local origination of multiple channel broadcasting and broadcast data services that more fully utilize the potential of public television digital programming.

The appropriation in this bill will be used to purchase multicasting and datacasting encoders for the State's three public digital transmitters in order to locally originate multiple channels and data delivery services for New Mexico.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Senate Bill 585 -- Page 2

The \$2.3 million appropriation contained in this bill is a non-recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY02 shall not revert to the general fund, but instead will remain in the Educational Television Equipment Fund for future purchases.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The following is provided for information only. It is not intended as a commentary on the merits of the program/project:

The Legislative Education Study Committee recommended funding at \$2.3 million for digital television to provide educational programming to school children and classrooms, to benefit higher education, and provide viewers of public television with additional programming choices.

UNM submitted a \$2.3 million request to the CHE to procure digital television equipment for New Mexico's three public television stations. This project was not, however, included in the CHE's funding recommendations for FY 01-02.

LG:FAR/ar