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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Godbey DATE TYPED 02/04/04 HB 521

SHORT TITLE Veterinary & Animal Protective Services SB _____

ANALYST Wilson

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY04	FY05	FY04	FY05		
	\$250.0			Recurring	GF

Companion to SB306

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 521 appropriates \$250 thousand from the General Fund to the Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD) to provide funding for salary and benefits for an administrator, investigator and euthanasia service provider or veterinary specialist and other animal protective services.

This bill provides the appropriation for the responsibilities required in SB306 which creates the Animal Protective Services Act. SB306 creates a seven member Animal Protective Services Board (APSB) appointed by the Governor.

The APSB will:

- Assist animal shelters by regulating city or county operated or contracted facilities and promulgate rules and regulations using public comment to establish minimum standards and infrastructure for sheltering agencies serving New Mexico communities.
- Establish Certified Euthanasia Practitioners who, when sufficiently trained and qualified, shall be licensed at a nominal fee to handle controlled substances for the limited purpose of humanely euthanizing unwanted animals in animal shelters licensed by the APSB.
- Revoke licenses of individuals who are not in compliance with euthanasia practitioner requirement and levy fines for shelters who are not in compliance.

- Develop a statewide spay and neuter plan to address the pet overpopulation crisis, ultimately reducing costs, liability and animal suffering.

Significant Issues

Animal services are a necessary part of every community in our State, mandated in part by NMSA 77-1-1-20 (specifically NMSA 77-1-12) and proven by the over 90,000 unwanted animals euthanized in New Mexico animal shelters each year. The constant outcry from the public for effective and humane animal services underscores that the cost of implementing humane animal services is the inherent responsibility of each community.

Without a safe place to shelter stray, abandoned or unwanted animals there are higher liability risks for the community and administration including:

- An increase in animal bite incidents;
- An increase in property damage (i.e. livestock depredation, vehicle damage, etc.);
- Civil and criminal suits when taxpayers allege mistreatment of sheltered animals;
- Increase in negative human and animal contact when taxpayers do not use or support their local shelter due to lack of faith in conduct and care;
- An increase in animal shelter costs that will continue to escalate without intervention which can be resolved by a spay and neuter plan;
- An increase in animal cruelty; and
- An increase in animal suffering.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$250.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the General Fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of Fiscal Year 2005 shall revert to the General Fund.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

RLD will hire 3 FTE equivalents to provide staff to the APSB and fulfill the requirements of the Animal Protective Services Act with part of this funding.

COMPANIONSHIP

HB521 is a companion bill to SB306, Animal Protective Act.

DW/prr