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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Campos DATE TYPED 1/28/04 HB _____

SHORT TITLE Create Naturopathic Health Care Task Force SB SJM 3

ANALYST Dunbar

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY04	FY05	FY04	FY05		
	NFI				

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Health (DOH)

Regulation and Licensing Dept. (RLD)—Boards and Commissions

Health Policy Commission (HPC)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Joint Memorial 3 directs the New Mexico Health Policy Commission (HPC) to create a task force to study the potential for licensing Naturopathic Physicians and Naturopaths. The task force would be composed of representatives from the New Mexico Association of Naturopathic Physicians, the Physicians of Naturopathic Medicine Association, other Naturopathic Associations and licensed health care providers and consumers.

A final report of the task force's findings would be made to the interim Legislative Health and Human Services Committee by October 2004.

Significant Issues

The licensing of naturopathic physicians is critical because current practice does not allow consumers to know the level and training of practitioners. Education and training of naturopathic providers currently varies from a correspondence school of unspecified length to a Bachelor of Science degree with four years of naturopathic medical school. Thirteen states and Puerto Rico have licensure requirements for naturopathic physicians.

The Medicaid program will work with the task force to provide information regarding questions concerning the process of provider enrollment. The Medicaid program currently does not enroll naturopathic physicians as eligible providers. In addition, the services rendered by naturopathic physicians are not a covered benefit of the Medicaid program.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

While SJM3 does not provide a specific appropriation, the HPC is able to assign staff and resources from its General Appropriation as needed to fulfill implementation of the memorial.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

Representation from the Regulation and Licensing Department, the Board of Medical Examiners and the Board of Pharmacy is not mentioned and would be useful.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Naturopathy is a distinct system of medicine that stresses health maintenance, disease prevention, patient education and patient responsibility. Naturopathy views health as more than an absence of disease. Its goal is to free the body to heal itself by enhancing its own self-healing powers.

Naturopathic medicine has experienced a tremendous resurgence in the last two decades. This is largely due to increased public awareness of the role of diet and lifestyle choices in the cause of chronic disease, as well as, the failure of modern medicine to deal effectively with these disorders.

In the 2003 Legislature, HB 456 defined naturopathic medicine as “a system of health care practiced by doctors of naturopathic medicine for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of human health conditions, injuries and diseases that uses education, natural medicines, homeopathy and therapies to support and stimulate a person’s intrinsic self-healing processes, including naturopathic physician medicine.”

As proposed in HB 456 under Scope of Practice, “Doctors of naturopathic medicine may use for preventive and therapeutic purposes a list of natural medicines and therapies, food, food extracts, certain medicines of medicine, animal and botanical origin, vitamins, minerals, natural hormones, enzymes, digestive aids, whole gland thyroid, plant substances, homeopathic preparations, topical medicines, counseling, biofeedback, dietary therapy, hygiene and immunizations, certain injections, naturopathic physical medicine, nutritional and lifestyle counseling, therapeutic devices and barrier devices for contraception.” Diagnostic tools include “physical and orifice examinations, diagnostic imaging, electrocardiograms, ultrasound, phlebotomy, clinical laboratory tests, examinations and physiological functions tests.” And, finally doctors of naturopathic medicine could prescribe natural hormones and contraceptive devices.

The task force to be created by SJM 3 can be expected to address scope of practice and licensing issues. Representation from the Regulation and Licensing Department, the Board of Medical Examiners and the Board of Pharmacy would be useful and could provide good perspective in these discussions.

Senate Joint Memorial Bill 3 Page 3

This memorial, according to RLD will address the issue of whether naturopath's may practice and would lead to criteria for licensure and standards of practice ultimately protecting the public.

According to the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians (www.naturopathic.org), thirteen states have regulatory licensing laws for naturopathic doctors. In each of these states, graduation from a four-year, residential naturopathic medical school and successful completion of a standard postdoctoral board examination (NPLEX) are licensure requirements. NPLEX includes basic science and clinical examinations, and is administered by the Northern American Board of Naturopathic Examiners (NABNE). NPLEX and NABNE provide national standards and examinations for the scientific and clinical practice of naturopathic medicine.

AMENDMENTS

On Page 2, line 19, after “other naturopathic associations” add “the Regulation and Licensing Department, the Board of Medical Examiners, the Board of Pharmacy and...”

BD/lg