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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Madelena DATE TYPED 01/24/05 HB 219

SHORT TITLE Native American Veterans Outreach Program SB _____

ANALYST Chabot

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY05	FY06	FY05	FY06		
	\$100.0			Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Indian Affairs (DIA)
Veterans' Services Department (VSD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 219 appropriates \$100 thousand from the general fund to VSD for the purpose of establishing an outreach program to assist Native American veterans in obtaining benefits to which they are entitled.

Significant Issues

VSD has 16 veteran service officers throughout the state but none are located on pueblo or tribal lands. Several years ago, VSD had a Native American veteran service officer that provided outreach services to Native Americans. When the individual left the department, a Native American was not selected to fill the position.

DIA states it has received comments and input from New Mexican Native American veterans stating a properly coordinated outreach program is necessary to address their "dire needs."

While Native Americans have served their country in disproportionately higher numbers than others, they may not have access to resources—health care, housing, social services, etc.—available to other veterans or to the general public. This bill would help address this need.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

A veteran service officer dedicated to Native American veteran issue could lead to improved satisfaction of VSD efforts to obtain benefits.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$100 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2006 shall revert to the general fund.

The LFC FY06 appropriation recommendation is balanced between revenues and expenditures and any increase in recurring funding must be offset by reductions in other areas of the recommendation. The Legislature must consider all priorities and funding requirements to find revenue to support this legislation.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL?

Veterans outreach would be accomplished by the existing veteran service officers.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

1. Can an existing veteran service officer position be realigned to support this requirement?
2. Is a new FTE required for this program?

GAC/lg