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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Luján, B. DATE TYPED 3/7/05 HB 742/aHAFC/aHF1#1
 SHORT TITLE Create Election Reform Task Force SB _____
 ANALYST Medina

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY05	FY06	FY05	FY06		
\$80.0				Non-Recurring	Fund Balance

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to voting and election reform legislation
 (House Bills 18, 19, 20, 1, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 41, 63, 64, 134, 208, 237, 261, 266, 329, 350, 361, 362, 686, 701, 732, 735, 794, 898, 915 and 958;
 and Senate Bills 40, 83, 106, 108, 168, 433, 462, 621, 642, 678, 680, 718, 784, and 997)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From
 Secretary of State (SOS)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Floor Amendment #1

The House Floor amendment increases the number of members of Election Reform Task Force from fifteen to sixteen by allowing for two county clerks from different political parties to serve on the task force, rather than only one person representing the county clerks.

Synopsis of HAFC Amendment

The House Appropriations and Finance Committee amendment changes the source of the appropriation to the Legislative Council Service from the general fund to cash balances.

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 742 provides for the appointment of a fifteen member Election Reform Task Force to be charged with the development and recommendations for reform of New Mexico's election laws. The task force would consist of three members of the State Senate, three members of the

House of Representatives, the state chairs of the major political parties of the state or their designees, the chair of the state county clerks' association or their designee, five members of the general public, and the Secretary of State or her designee.

House Bill 742 appropriates \$80.0 from the general fund to the Legislative Council Service for the purpose of staffing the Election Reform Task Force.

Significant Issues

Numerous pieces of legislation related to voting and election reform have been introduced. The Election Reform Task Force would examine New Mexico's election system, identify its strengths and deficiencies and consider improvement that could be made to address any problem areas. The task force would be required to submit specific recommendations and proposed legislation to the Governor and to the Legislative Council no later than December 15, 2006.

The creation of an Election Reform Task Force would allow for more opportunities for cooperative and thoughtful consideration of improvement to the state's election system. Regular meetings of a task force would provide the public and decision makers with more opportunities to discuss and debate election reform than a legislative session allows. The creation of a task force would allow for careful study and consideration of complex issues related to the Election Code and federal mandates such as the *Help America Vote Act of 2002*.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$80.0 contained in this bill is a non-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.

This bill carries an emergency clause and the appropriation is for expenditure in fiscal years 2005 and 2006.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

Numerous pieces of legislation related to voting and election reform have been introduced during the 2005 Legislative Session. The issues raised by the legislation include voter identification, comprehensive Election Code cleanup, and paper ballots/receipts, among others.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

This bill carries an emergency clause.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL?

The issues raised by the numerous pieces of election reform legislation introduced this session would not benefit from more opportunities for cooperative and thoughtful consideration of election reform that an Election Reform Task Force would provide.