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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Ortiz y Pino DATE TYPED 2-28-05 HB \_\_\_\_\_

SHORT TITLE Homelessness and Mental Illness Film SB 1000

ANALYST Collard

### APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY05	FY06	FY05	FY06		
	\$250.0			Non-Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to HB191, HB486, HB595, HB600, SB88 and SB344.

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Department of Health (DOH)  
 Health Policy Commission (HPC)  
 Public Education Department (PED)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 1000 appropriates \$250 thousand from the general fund to DOH for the purpose of developing a film addressing homelessness and mental illness in the homeless population.

#### Significant Issues

DOH indicates, according to the President’s Freedom Commission on Mental Health, “Stigma is a pervasive barrier to understanding the gravity of mental illnesses and the importance of mental health.” This film would fit with the Commission’s *Goal 1, Recommendation 1.1* Advance and implement a national campaign to reduce the stigma of seeking care and a national strategy for suicide prevention.

This bill will help support the upcoming changes in the behavioral health service system beginning July 1 by reaching a broader market through accepted technology.

PED notes the following statistics:

- The number of homeless children and youths in New Mexico, according to the PED 2003-04 program data collection report, is 3,681.
- The primary night residences for New Mexico's homeless children and youths, at the time of initial identification by LEAs, are shelters, doubled-up (by having an unreliable nighttime residence), unsheltered (e.g., cars, parks, campgrounds, etc.) and hotels.
- The following were barriers to the enrollment and success of homeless children and youths during the 2003-04 school year: school selection, transportation, school records, immunizations or other medical records, lack of affordable housing, long wait lists for public housing, medical care for undocumented children and unaccompanied youths (unaccompanied youths is defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act as including children and adolescents who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian).
- Children and youths have to be free from segregation, isolation and stigmatization.
- Homeless children have more mental health problems than other children, but less than one-third receive treatment.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

The appropriation of \$250 thousand contained in this bill is a nonrecurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY06 shall revert to the general fund.

DOH notes there will be normal costs associated with the Request for Proposal and contract process to produce a professionally done film by an outside vendor with expertise in film production. These expenses could be absorbed by DOH.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

DOH indicates it has staff available for contract oversight and marketing.

### **RELATIONSHIP**

Senate Bill 1000 relates to House Bill 191, and its duplicate, Senate Bill 88, which appropriate \$150 thousand to the Human Services Department to expand access to homeless programs and services statewide; House Bill 486, and its duplicate, Senate Bill 344, which appropriate \$548 thousand to the Veteran's Department to provide services for homeless veterans; House Bill 595, which appropriates \$50 thousand to the Socorro Homeless Program; and House Bill 600, which appropriates money to Taos local government for homeless and abused and neglected youth in Taos County.

### **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

DOH notes, as many as 700,000 Americans are homeless on any given night. An estimated 20 to 25 percent of these people have a serious mental illness, and one-half of this subgroup also have an alcohol and/or drug problem. (<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/Homelessness>.) Stigma regarding mental illness and homelessness continue to create barriers to accessing treatment and services that can address both conditions. In his 1999 landmark report to the Nation on mental illness and health, Surgeon General David Satcher called on America to tear down the

barriers of prejudice that block access to services and recovery.

Most of what we know as individuals comes not from personal experience, but from the stories that surround us from birth. In the past it was families, religious institutions, schools, and respected members of the community who instilled cultural attitudes. “Today, this is done by the mass media,” says George Gerbner, founder of the Cultural Environment Movement, and a researcher whose career includes 30 years of monitoring the cultural impact of television on society.

Television is, in Gerbner’s words, “the wholesale distributor of the stigma of mental illness.” His research has shown that characters portrayed on television as having mental illnesses have four times the violence rate and six times the victimization rate of other characters. Gerbner notes that “Violence and retribution are shown as inherent in the illness itself and thus inescapable. No other group in the dramatic world of television suffers and is shown to deserve such a dire fate.” George Gerbner. (1993).

HPC indicates the bill does not identify the target audience of the film or the purpose of the film.

HPC also cites the National Commission for the Homeless, ([www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org)) with the following statistics:

- It is very difficult to measure how many people are homeless at any given time because, in most cases, homelessness is a temporary condition. According to a 2000 Urban Institute Study, approximately 3.5 million people in the US, 1.35 million of them are children, are likely to be homeless in a given year. Many people will not be counted because they are in places where researchers are unable to include them e.g. vehicles, living with relatives.
- People need affordable housing. A lack of affordable housing is a primary cause of homelessness. The gap between the number of affordable houses available and the number of people needing them has created a housing crisis for poor people. Recently rents have soared putting housing out of reach for poor Americans.
- People need health care. A serious illness can cause a downward spiral for people struggling to work and pay rent. Rates of acute health problems are extremely high among the homeless. Homeless children experience health problems that can impede their development. Over 41 million Americans are uninsured. According to NM Human Services Department, approximately 414,000 New Mexicans are without insurance.
- People need livable incomes. Wages should be high enough so that families are able to support themselves in their community. Wage trends have caused disparities between the rich and the poor. Since 1975, the real value of the minimum wage has fallen by 25%. Approximately 42% of people experiencing homelessness are employed. These workers are employed in an industry characterized by low wages, no health insurance, no job security and inadequate work protection.
- The declining value of public assistance is contributing to homelessness and poverty.
- People need education. Education gives people an opportunity to obtain a livable wage and better benefits. Homeless children face barriers in school enrollment, attendance and success. Transportation to school is a huge barrier and many times these children lack the necessary documents for enrollment and are turned away.
- People need their civil rights protected. Homeless are often victims of hate crimes and violence, sometimes resulting in death.

HPC also cites demographics of the homeless as of 2001:

- In the US, approximately 39 percent of the homeless are children.
- Single homeless adults are more likely to be male than female.
- In a 2003 survey of 25 cities, the United States Conference of Mayors founds that families made up 40 percent of the homeless population.
- Battered women who live in poverty are often forced to choose between abusive relationships and homelessness.
- Approximately 23 percent of the single adult homeless population suffers from some form of severe and persistent mental illness.
- Drug addiction plays a big factor in homelessness particularly in single males.
- Approximately 33 percent of homeless men are veterans, although veterans comprise only 23 percent of the general adult male population.

**KBC/lg**