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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Lopez DATE TYPED 3/1/2005 HB \_\_\_\_\_

SHORT TITLE Needs of Grandchildren Raised by Grandparents SB SJM 50

ANALYST Dunbar

### APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY05	FY06	FY05	FY06		
	Minimal				

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to: SB 254, HB 229

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Children Youth and Families Department (CYFD)  
 Department of Health (DOH)  
 NM Public Education Department (NMPED)  
 Human Services Department (HSD)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

Senate Joint Memorial 50 calls for a task force to develop an interdepartmental plan to assess the needs of children and grandparents living in grandparent-headed households. The task force would include the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD), Department of Health (DOH), Human Services Department (HSD), the Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSD), state and local law enforcement agencies, the statewide association of District Court judges, the State Bar, and caregivers and advocates for families and children. The task force's responsibilities would be to:

- Identify the number of children living with grandparents, their demographics and needs;
- Develop a plan to ensure that such children and grandparents have access to educational, social, medical and mental health services to which they are entitled;
- Study how other states provide support to grandparents in this situation; and

- Report task force progress and Legislative recommendations to the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee at the October 2005 meeting.

### Significant Issues

When parents are not able to care for their children or when parental care results in abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the state to provide for the safety of the children. In New Mexico, where the culture of the extended family is strong, grandparents, siblings and other relatives frequently assume the parenting responsibilities for periods of time ranging from a few days to a lifetime. This familial solution provides children with a connection to their family of origin and reduces the financial and administrative burden on the state, but it frequently adds a severe financial, physical, and emotional burden on elderly family members. The purpose of SJM 50 is to research the impact of these familial arrangements on both children and caregivers and assure that these families receive the support services the state would otherwise be providing for these children by CYFD and other state agencies.

According to the AARP October 2003 *New Mexico Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children*: (\*These data are taken from the U.S. Census Bureau Table DP-2. Profile Selected Social Characteristics: 2000):

- Nationally, 4.5 million children are living in grandparent-headed households (6.3% of all children under age 18). This represents a 30% increase from 1990 to 2000.
- In New Mexico, there are 41,085 children living in grandparent-headed households (8.1% of all the children in the state). There are another 10,572 children living in households headed by other relatives (2.1% of all the children in the state).
- In New Mexico, 54,041 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [4,272 in Albuquerque]: 2% of these grandparents are African American; 53% are Hispanic/Latino; 20% are American Indian or Alaskan Native; and 23% are White. 30% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present.

### **RELATIONSHIP**

Relates to: SB 254 and HB 229 that appropriate \$100,000 to the Children Youth and Families Department to provide intergenerational training, research and support programs to assist grandparents raising at-risk grandchildren. The appropriation is specific to Doña Ana county and southern Otero county.

### **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

It might be useful to include children being raised by relatives other than grandparents as objects of study and recommendations within SJM 50.

No lead agency for the task force is designated in SJM 50.

### **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

CYFD currently provides services to families and children resulting from reports of abuse or neglect. Familial relatives including grandparents are explored for possible out-of-home placement for children in CYFD custody. A grandparent will be considered for placement if they can meet

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the needs of the child. In these situations, CYFD currently provides several support services to the grandparent caregivers.

By raising their grandchildren, these grandparents save the state millions of dollars annually in foster-care costs, provide some family stability for these children and help preserve the relationship of the children to their families, communities and cultures. CYFD provides childcare assistance to income eligible grandparents who have custody or guardianship of their grandchildren. Grandparents are exempt from co-payments for childcare assistance under current childcare assistance regulations. Childcare assistance may be used for after-school childcare.

**BD/lg:yr**