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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Lopez DATE TYPED 2/10/05 HB _____

SHORT TITLE At-Home Infant Care Program SB 333

ANALYST Dunbar

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY05	FY06	FY05	FY06		
	\$180.0			Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Children Youth and Families Department (CYFD)

Department of Health (DOH)

Health Policy Commission (HPC)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 333 appropriates \$180,000 from the General Fund in FY06 to Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) to continue their pilot at-home infant care program.

SB 333 provides for payments to unemployed parents in Dona Ana County to stay at home and take care of their infant child for the purpose of promoting parent/child bonding, and in doing so also requires the parent/s to participate in early childhood and parenting training. Since August of 2004, the program provides eligible parents a small stipend to complete “Families Strengthening Partnership” coursework through New Mexico State University (NMSU) in childcare, child development and general life skills. The goal of the program is to encourage these same parents, who now have considerable child development information to become childcare providers for other families in their communities. It is anticipated that 50 to 60 families will be served in FY06.

Any unexpended or unencumbered balance shall revert to the General Fund.

Significant Issues

These parents are paid by CYFD at a rate equivalent to that of child care providers in registered and licensed family child care homes for toddlers and preschool children.

Parent/s enrolled in the Families Strengthening Partnership classes are given pre- and post-questionnaires to rate their knowledge of parenting and general life skills. Data collected by NMSU indicates a marked improvement of positive parenting practices in all subject matter components of the course. (Information from CYFD's In-Home Infant Child Care Program handout)

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$180 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY06 shall revert to the general fund.

The appropriation is in the CYFD budget request and in the LFC budget recommendation adopted by HAFC.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

CYFD will continue to administer the pilot program with existing resources.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Research and literature show the importance of providing a caring a supportive environment for infants and young children. SB 333 enables parents of infants to remain home with their infant as well as to receive parenting training.

The advantages of continuing the at-home infant care program include:

- Parents in this program will gain useful information in areas of child growth and development and in childcare best practices. Results in pre and post questionnaires from the 40 parents completing coursework indicated a marked improvement of positive parenting practices in all subject matter components of the course.
- These same parents are encouraged to begin childcare provision in their communities, thus building the supply of childcare providers in Dona Ana County. Since the parents (child care providers) have completed extensive courses in childcare and child development, they will be able to provide a highly valuable service to their communities.
- Becoming childcare providers will supplement income of these low-income families.
- Children will benefit from "enriching environments" provided by caregivers who clearly understand child development and how to interact effectively with children to foster health growth and development.