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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1-26-06

SPONSOR Chasey LAST UPDATED _____ HB 19

SHORT TITLE AT-HOME INFANT CARE PROGRAM SB _____

ANALYST Lucero

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
	\$360.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates SB161, Relates to, Conflicts with, Companion to

Duplicates Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act
Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD)
Department of Health (DH)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 19 appropriates \$360.0 from the GENERAL FUND to Children, Youth and Families Department for the purpose of continuing the pilot at-home infant care program.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$360.0 contained in this bill is a RECURRING expense to the GENERAL FUND. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of 2007 shall revert to the GENERAL FUND.

The LFC budget recommendation contained \$85.5 from SB190 which was adopted by HAFC. The executive did not recommend this SB190 item.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

HB 19 proposes to provide 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 would require the parent/s to participate in early childhood and parenting training. Since August of 2004, the program has provided eligible parents a small stipend to complete “Families Strengthening Partnership” coursework through New Mexico State University (NMSU) in child-care, 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.

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)

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

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

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

Duplicates SB161

This bill relates to General Appropriation Act. LFC recommendation included \$85.5 from SB190. HAFC adopted LFC recommendation.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

The bill does not mention eligibility criteria. Program data did not mention eligibility criteria. It is unclear if this pilot follows traditional eligibility at 150% of the federal poverty level or if there is some other means test.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Research and literature show the importance of providing a caring a supportive environment for infants and young children. HB0019 and SB161 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 develop-

ment, 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.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Parents will have to utilize traditional child care.

DL/nt