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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Larranaga ORIGINAL DATE 1/31/2007
LAST UPDATED _____ HB 376
SHORT TITLE Expand UNM Biomedical Engineering SB _____
ANALYST McOlash

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	\$682.5	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates SB 117.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

University of New Mexico (UNM)

Economic Development Department (EDD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 376 appropriates \$682,500 from the General Fund to the Board of Regents of UNM for expenditure in FY 2008 to expand the Biomedical Engineering Program.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$682,500 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the General Fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY2008 shall revert to the General Fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The University of New Mexico Center for Biomedical Engineering researches biomaterials, nanobiotechnology, bioanalytical microsystems and bioenergy technologies.

A UNM analysis indicates this request seeks funding for a biomedical engineering program director and four additional faculty slots, and equipment for education and research. This faculty will:

- Create BME concentrations in existing School of Engineering undergraduate curricula
- Develop a MS/PhD level graduate program in BME
- Develop a BME undergraduate (BS) degree

The program will support new faculty members that will:

- Coordinate research, development and education in biomedical engineering.
- Represent a critical mass of researchers and research activity to support planned educational programs.
- Seed the funding of new educational programs in biomedical engineering including:
 - A new undergraduate certificate program that coordinates course offerings across engineering departments.
 - A new interdisciplinary graduate program in biomedical engineering to augment and parallel the current Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program. The first two years of the program will be devoted to planning and implementing this program. Faculty members that serve the certificate program will also serve the graduate program.
 - Coordinated articulation programs focused on biomedical engineering with feeder schools. The initial program will be developed with NMHU, and expected to expand to include other schools throughout the State.

Study, identify and justify the need for an undergraduate BME program, based on the response to the certificate programs, to be introduced five years from now.

These funds would augment funding received by UNM through the Instruction and General (I&G) funding formula for operation of the existing Biomedical Engineering Program.

This proposal was submitted to the HED by UNM, but was not included in the Department's funding recommendation for FY08. UNM's request consists of two line items: a recurring amount of \$895,800 and a non-recurring amount of \$3,500,000.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

HB 376 is a duplicate of SB 117.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The UNM Center for Biomedical Engineering has received a \$2.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation over the next five years (2006 through 2011) to fund a research and educational partnership with Harvard University, Albuquerque Public Schools and the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute. The project will focus on a multidisciplinary area of materials technology; biomaterials, which are synthetic and natural, solid and sometimes liquid, and used in medical devices or in contact with biological systems (UNM Press Release, July 26, 2006).

BM/nt