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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/05/07

SPONSOR Herrera LAST UPDATED 03/16/07 HJM 10/aHHGAC/aSFL#1

SHORT TITLE Create Food Gap Task Force SB \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYST Weber

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	NFI		

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

NM Department of Agriculture (DOA)  
 Economic Development Department (EDD)  
 Indian Affairs Department (IAD)  
 Human Services Department (HSD)  
 Department of Health (DOH)  
 Children Youth and Families (CYFD)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Senate Floor Amendment #1

On page three line nine the term “appropriate non-profit organizations” is changed to “agricultural non-profit organizations”.

#### Synopsis of HHGAC Amendment

House and Government Affairs Committee amendment for House Joint Memorial 10 adds the Aging and Long Term Services Department to the agencies to notify. In addition, the New Mexico Agriculture Department is designated to provide administrative support rather than the Economic Development Department.

#### Synopsis of Original Bill

## **House Joint Memorial 10/aHHGAC – Page 2**

House Joint Memorial 10 requests governor to appoint a food gap task force. Member shall include:

- Representatives from the New Mexico food and agriculture policy council,
- The New Mexico task force to end hunger,
- The New Mexico Department of Agriculture,
- The Economic Development Department,
- The Department of Health,
- The Human Services Department,
- The Indian Affairs Department,
- The Department of Transportation,
- regional councils of government,
- the grocery industry, and
- appropriate not-for-profit organizations.

The Food Gap Task Force is to investigate ways to improve access of rural and underserved New Mexicans to sources of healthy and affordable foods. HJM 10 proposes exploring ways to improve coordination among existing food programs, health initiatives and rural economic development programs to rebuild the infrastructure of New Mexico's (NM) food and farming systems; potential partnerships between the state and private for-profit and not-for-profit entities; and economic incentives and finance options that the state could provide to assist grocery store owners to provide better access and less expensive options for health food for rural and underserved New Mexicans.

HJM 10 requests The Economic Development Department provide administrative support. The Task Force, is to develop a report to the Governor and the legislative interim committees by October 30, 2007.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

In a corrected agency response EDD indicates no fiscal impact.

### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

The Indian Affairs Department contributes.

Access to adequate and healthy food is a serious problem in New Mexico's Indian Country. According to the 2000 Census, 36.1% of Indians in New Mexico lived below the poverty level. Between 1995 and 1997, the United States Department of Agriculture ("USDA") determined that 22.2% of Native American households were food insecure. The USDA utilizes the following definition of food insecurity:

“The limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable way

Further, the same study found that one or more members of these households suffered from moderate to severe hunger, with 8.6% of households experiencing both food insecurity and hunger. The USDA defines hunger as:

“The uneasy or painful sensation caused by an [involuntary] lack of food. [Or] the recurrent and involuntary lack of access to food.”

Among the Zuni, for example, all 2,000 children living in the Pueblo are eligible for free breakfasts and lunches, with two-thirds of the Tribe’s inhabitants enrolled in federal food programs.

The rates of food insecurity and hunger among Indians are far more pervasive than in the nation at-large. For the period between 1995 and 2001, between 8.8 and 10.5% of households in general suffered food insecurity, depending on the year. Only between 3.1 and 3.9% of the same universe of households experienced both food insecurity and hunger.

The Department of Health adds.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture’s 2005 Household Food Security report, NM ranks first in the nation in households experiencing “food insecurity” and ranks second in “very low food security”. According to the NM Hunger Task Force nearly one in six New Mexicans are “food insecure,” and almost one in four New Mexicans experienced “food insecurity with hunger” in 2004 (<http://www.nmhunger.org>).

A 2005 study by the NM Food and Agricultural Policy Council, *Closing New Mexico’s Rural Food Gap*, identified the following issues: distances to grocery stores are much further in rural NM and people are more likely to lack reliable transportation; distribution of produce is more complex and expensive; and rural grocery stores are more expensive than urban stores

According to the 2006 NM Plan to Promote Healthier Weight, poor nutrition and obesity cause health problems which include diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis and chronic joint symptoms. “People who engage in regular physical activity and healthy eating practices decrease their risk for chronic diseases and generally live healthier and longer lives. Thousands of cases of diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis and their related disabilities could potentially be prevented or postponed through improved nutrition increased of physical activity, improved fitness and attaining a healthier weight “ ( [www.health.state.nm.us/obesity.html](http://www.health.state.nm.us/obesity.html))

MW/nt