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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/21/07

SPONSOR Jennings LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB \_\_\_\_\_

SHORT TITLE 5<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Safehouse Program SB 1082

ANALYST Leger

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	\$75.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)

Administrative Office of District Attorneys (AODA)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 1082 appropriates \$75 thousand from the general fund to the fifth judicial district attorney for operations of the safehouse program in Chaves county.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$75 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY08 shall revert to the general fund.

### SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to AODA, in 1993 when Esperanza House, the safehouse program in Chaves county, opened it had one full time employee, and performed 65 forensic interviews in its first full year of service. At that time, it served only Chaves County. By 2003, the programs had expanded to include SANE (sexual assault examinations) and other programs, with service not only to Chaves County, but also to parts of Lincoln, Lea and Eddy Counties, 2 full time employees, 5

part time employees, and 230 forensic interviews in that year, with 24/7 on-call coverage for SANE examinations. Although outside funding has been obtained to provide additional programs, the funding does not cover the increased administrative costs and the extremely high cost of required insurance.

The Esperanza program provides critical services to victims of sexual assault and to child victims of crime, by providing a local facility for sexual assault examinations and a safe, non-intimidating environment for children's interviews. These facilities are key to successful prosecution of sexual abuse cases and cases in which children are victims of crime. The rising number of cases has placed the facility in a cash flow crisis, and the requested appropriation is needed to meet the increased administrative costs which have resulted from the increased case load and increased level of services to the community.

JL/mt