

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill No: HB 169

48th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2008

Short Title: NMSU Digital Pathways Education Program

Sponsor(s): Representative Ray Begaye

Analyst: Peter van Moorsel

Date: January 22, 2008

Bill Summary:

HB 169 appropriates funds to the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University (NMSU) to support the digital pathways distance education program.

Fiscal Impact:

\$150,000 is appropriated from the General Fund for expenditure in FY 09. The bill contains a reversion clause.

\$100,000 of this proposal will go to scholarships and the remaining \$50,000 will be used for community mentors located on the campus of Diné College.

Issues:

The proposal in HB 169 will assist in providing scholarships for Native American and non-traditional students transferring from Tribal Colleges in New Mexico to NMSU to ensure successful completion of degree programs. NMSU currently serves Native American student populations among the 22 pueblos and tribes in New Mexico, and one area of particular need is eastern Navajo Nation. According to the Higher Education Department (HED) analysis, community mentors are critical to the needs of Native American who are pursuing degrees via distance learning. A mentor serves to assist students with technology and content issues and is a key ingredient for students to achieve the confidence and abilities toward progress and completion of degrees.

HED reports that NMSU did not submit this request to the department, and it is not included in the department's funding recommendation for FY 09.

Related Bills:

None