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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/23/08

SPONSOR Bratton LAST UPDATED _____ HB 91

SHORT TITLE NMSU Underrepresented Students Alliance SB _____

ANALYST Haug

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$270.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)
New Mexico State University (NMSU)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 91 appropriates \$270.0 from the general fund to the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University for the Alliances For Underrepresented Students Program, to increase the numbers of bachelors of science degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics disciplines awarded to underrepresented minorities and students with disabilities.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$270.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2009 shall revert to the general fund.

HED states that This request was submitted to the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) by NMSU and was included in NMHED's funding recommendation for FY09 in the amount of \$384,000.

The HED's evaluation table of FY09 Research and Public Service Projects provided to the LFC classifies this project as a "supports state priorities" project. Reasons for this classification

decision are not provided. (LFC Report 07-20, Higher Education Department Review of Selected Research and Public Service Projects, January 12, 2008, Table 4, p74.)

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

NMSU states that the increase in appropriations will: 1) support increased numbers of Integrated Learning and Mentoring Communities proven to increase retention of at-risk engineering freshmen, 2) expand the number and range of mentoring activities available to underrepresented students enrolled at community colleges throughout the state, and 3) support expanded activities in the NMSU M-TEC Laboratory, a facility providing mentoring and hands-on design and manufacturing experiences to students.

NMSU states further that, pilot projects indicate high potential for success:

- Historically, only 20% of students who start in College Algebra graduate with a degree in engineering. In comparison, 63% of the students who have participated in the Integrated Learning and Mentoring Communities clusters are currently retained in engineering.
- From 2001-2005, 39 students have participated in the summer bridge program. Of these, 77% continue to major in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines in institutions of higher learning, and 41% have successfully transferred to a four-year degree program.

The HED states that the Alliance for Underrepresented Students (AUS) is a public service project of NMSU that has been supported by annual funding under HB2 (General Appropriations Act) for the past ten years. The university submits funding requests annually for this and other initiatives that are considered to be Research and Public Service Projects (RPSP).

According to HED, requested support will significantly expand community college and university student activities contributing to recruitment, retention, and progression. NMSU indicates that 100 university at-risk freshmen engineering students will be supported through integrated learning and mentoring communities that have the support of participating faculty, including engineering and manufacturing experiences. Twenty five community college students will benefit from increased availability of a summer research/mentoring program specifically designed to impact students' decisions to transfer to one of the state's 4-year universities.

RELATIONSHIP

House Bill 91 relates to Senate Bill 74 which appropriates an identical amount for the same purpose with slightly different language.

GH/mt