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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 01/21/08

SPONSOR Berry LAST UPDATED _____ HB 98

SHORT TITLE Cancer Patient Legal & Insurance Assistance SB _____

ANALYST Hanika-Ortiz

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$25.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Health (DOH)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 98 appropriates \$25 thousand from the General Fund to the DOH Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Bureau in FY09 to provide for volunteer-led clinics to help cancer patients or caregivers navigate legal, insurance and paperwork issues, and to supply cancer patients or caregivers with a cancer treatment organizer tool. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY09 shall revert to the General Fund.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$25 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the General Fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY09 shall revert to the General Fund.

This appropriation request was not included in the DOH's Executive Budget Request for FY09. Both the Executive and Legislative budget recommendations contain \$50 thousand for community-based cancer patient support services. However, none of these resources specifically identified providing legal support services for this population.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

DOH reports the bill will make legal, insurance and paperwork assistance clinics available to cancer patients and caregivers, providing free one-on-one consultations for completing paperwork for insurance/medical coverage, disability, legal and other financial issues. It is estimated that there will be 8,030 new cases of cancer diagnosed in New Mexico in 2008 (American Cancer Society, 2007).

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

DOH further reports the bill supports the DOH FY09 Strategic Plan, Public Health Goal: Improve Public Health Outcomes through Public and Private Partnerships. The bill also supports the NM Cancer Council's Statewide Comprehensive Cancer Plan 2007–2011: Cancer Treatment Goal Area, Access to Care Objective 2, “to facilitate access to cancer treatment, especially among minority and rural populations, and among low-income, underinsured, and uninsured populations, by 2011.”

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

DOH notes that the additional activities this bill will generate can be accomplished with volunteers and existing staff.

TECHNICAL

The bill is unclear as to what part of the state will receive the services. Rural areas are typically the most underserved and the appropriation requested may not be enough to service all rural areas within the state.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

DOH further notes the bill may help to address the need for Spanish-language assistance relating to legal and financial issues affecting these particular health care consumers.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Funding may not be available to provide for volunteer-led clinics to help certain consumers with legal and financial issues affecting their health care.

AHO/bb