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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/25/08

SPONSOR M.H. Garcia LAST UPDATED _____ HB 300

SHORT TITLE NMSU Student Athlete Support Programs SB _____

ANALYST Haug

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$50.0	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 300 appropriates \$50.0 from the general fund to the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University to pay for athletic student academic support programs and services.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$50.0 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.

A request for \$40,000 was submitted by NMSU to the New Mexico Higher Education Department during the RPS process but is not included in the Department's funding recommendations for FY09. According to NMSU's Associate Athletics Director, this amount was increased to \$50,000 to attract a better pool of candidates. Beginning with FY08, the program received a \$20,000 recurring appropriation from the General Fund.

The HED's evaluation table of FY09 Research and Public Service Projects provided to the LFC classifies this project as a "does not fit within HED priorities for Higher Education" 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, p75.)

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to NMSU, under the strategy of Academic Support, the appropriation in House Bill 300 will provide student-athletes with additional support staff to help achieve academic success and stated 925+ Academic Performance Ratio (APR) score. This position is needed to assist the Athletic Department in improving graduation rates of student-athletes and meeting NCAA APR requirements (925 minimum APR score for each NMSU athletic team). The additional staffing will help the Athletic Department minimize the impact of student-athletes doing poorly (or being ruled in-eligible) and caught early (not just midterm but a more aggressive approach and not just at the end of each semester). The new advisor will allow the Athletics Department's Eligibility Specialist to spend more time on monitoring and providing more frequent updates (at least monthly) regarding academic status of student-athletes. Also, NMSU's success in athletics proves we are on our way to being one of the best mid-major athletic programs with a good balance in and out of the classroom. However, new NCAA mandates and more student-athletes needing assistance puts NMSU in an understaffed situation in reaching academic and NCAA requirements

According to the HED, the appropriation would be used to hire a full-time Academic Support Program and Services Center advisor to further implement the existing program and take on tasks currently performed by the eligibility specialist already on staff.

The program is designed to assist all NMSU athletes to improve their academic scores and qualify for the NCAA Academic Progress Rate (APR). The APR awards points to athletes to measure academic eligibility standards. A team's cumulative score of 925 is considered a cut-off point, and any teams falling below this score are subject to contemporaneous penalties that take effect the following academic year. The Academic Support Programs and Services Center serves approximately 350 students annually and 120 students daily.

GH/mt