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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/02/08

SPONSOR Tyler LAST UPDATED _____ HB 482

Western Heritage Museum at New Mexico Junior

SHORT TITLE College SB _____

ANALYST Williams

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$60.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Recurring Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act to the Higher Education Department, Policy Development and Institutional Financial Oversight Program

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)
 Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)
 New Mexico Junior College

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 482 appropriates \$60,000 from the General Fund to the Higher Education Department for the purpose of funding curator services at the Western Heritage Museum and Lea County Cowboy Hall of Fame.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$60,000 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the General Fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY 09 shall revert to the General Fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Western Heritage Museum and Lea County Cowboy Hall of Fame opened a new facility of approximately 29,000 square feet in January 2006. In June 2007, the museum hired a new director.

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According to DCA, the role of a museum curator is to expand and care for the museum's collection and organize exhibitions. "Over the long term, a curatorial staff position will be essential to fulfilling the Western Heritage Museum and Lea County Cowboy Hall of Fame's potential leadership role in education, quality of life, and economic vitality for the community and region."

HED states funds would be used for an additional staff FTE. This staffer would use museum-related software called Past Perfect to catalogue and organize artifacts in the museum collections. Further, this staffer will interface with other museums, develop new exhibits and improve the collections.

An expansion proposal for this project was not submitted by New Mexico Junior College to HED for consideration in the Fall 2007 budget cycle. The January 2008 LFC report "Higher Education Department Review of Selected Research and Public Service Projects" discusses best practices for funding these types of projects.

The House-passed substitute for HB 2, et. al. contains \$145,900 for the Western Heritage Museum and Lea County Cowboy Hall of Fame within the category of special projects expansion, shown within the general fund appropriation for other financing uses for the Higher Education Department, Policy Development and Institutional Financial Oversight program. The amount in HB 2 for FY09 is flat compared to the FY08 operating budget.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

1. To what extent are other revenues available, such as admissions fees and private donations?

AW/mt