

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current FIRs (in HTML & Adobe PDF formats) are available on the NM Legislative Website (legis.state.nm.us). Adobe PDF versions include all attachments, whereas HTML versions may not. Previously issued FIRs and attachments may be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/21/08

SPONSOR Grubestic LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE First Responder Stress Reduction Training SB 183

ANALYST Peery-Galon

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$315.0	Recurring	General Fund

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Health (DOH)
 Department of Public Safety (DPS)
 Indian Affairs Department (IAD)

No Responses Received From

Association of Counties
 New Mexico Municipal League

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 183 appropriates \$315.0 from the general fund to the Department of Public Safety to provide statewide first responder stress-reduction training.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$315.0 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.

DOH states the proposed legislation would require ongoing funding to sustain its effectiveness over time and to accommodate turnover and new recruits into first responder professions.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

DOH states research indicates that post traumatic stress disorder is a serious health condition that is a consequence of critical incident exposure in the line of duty for all first responders in emergency response fields. Approximately, 50 percent of all disaster and emergency workers are likely to develop significant distress. The prevalence of post traumatic stress disorder is 10 to 15 percent for law enforcement personnel.

DOH manages the first responder stress reduction program. DOH reports the Critical Incident Stress Management Program provides debriefing for first responders exposed to job related traumatic events. The proposed legislation would assist first responders to develop self-management skills and would develop a curriculum to provide continuing credits for those professionals who complete the course.

DPS states the training is needed throughout the state. Some agencies have existing programs, but not all do because they do not have the in-house resources to provide such services to their personnel.

IAD reports that according to the National Institute of Justice, law enforcement officers and first responders “face a number of unusual, often highly disturbing, sources of stress” including: organizational stresses, stresses inherent in law enforcement work, frustration with other parts of the criminal justice system, and personal difficulties. Researchers consider law enforcement a highly stressful occupation that contributes to high rates of divorce, alcoholism, suicide and other emotional and health problems. IAD reports that many state and federal law enforcement agencies have developed stress management systems to meet the mental health needs of their officers. These agencies have found that these programs “improve efficiency, morale and image” as well as help “protect the significant financial investment the agencies have made in their officer and ensure that officers are in the best condition to protect and serve the public.”

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

IAD reports that the New Mexico State Police has a stress management and reduction program that has been utilized in its department for many years.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

Senate Bill 183 has a relationship with House Bill 50.

RPG/bb