

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill No:** HB 217a

**49th Legislature, 1st Session, 2009**

**Short Title:** NMHU Bilingual Ed Materials

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives Richard D. Vigil and Thomas A. García

**Analyst:** James Ball

**Date:** February 20, 2009

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**AS AMENDED**

**The House Education Committee amendment adds language to include bilingual education programs in the appropriation.**

**Original Bill Summary:**

HB 217 makes an appropriation for bilingual education materials at New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU).

**Fiscal Impact:**

\$260,000 is appropriated to the Board of Regents at NMHU from the General Fund for FY 10.

Unexpended and unencumbered funds revert to the General Fund.

**Fiscal Issues:**

According to the Higher Education Department (HED), NMHU received \$60,000 in recurring funding in FY 09 for a program that produces bilingual education materials. HB 217 would increase that funding by \$200,000. The program budget data indicates that the majority of additional funding will support increases in professional salaries and stipends.

HED reports that this request was submitted for review to the department by NMHU in the amount of \$200,000. HED has a neutral recommendation for this project for FY 10.

The Fiscal Impact Report for HB 217 states the concerns of the Legislative Finance Committee regarding the growth of research and public service projects within the higher education budget, as well as the alignment of these projects with state goals and strategic plans. The committee also continues to have significant concerns about accountability and performance outcomes for these projects.

**Issues:**

NMHU's analysis of HB 217 indicates that the Bilingual Education Materials Program preserves and promotes the Hispano culture and language of New Mexico statewide, nationally, and internationally. This is accomplished by producing bilingual educational materials for schools and other educational institutions as well as for public use. These materials promote Hispano culture by:

- sustaining and augmenting the use of the Spanish language;
- promoting literacy in Spanish and English; and
- providing insight into other aspects of the culture.

NMHU reports that the goal of the program is to produce, distribute and make available:

- AMIGOS, a monthly periodical;
- Aspectos Culturales, a radio program;
- trainings;
- digitalization of materials; and
- other publications and presentations.

**Background:**

According to the Public Education Department, in school year 2008-2009, 58 school districts and 17 charter schools were implementing state bilingual multicultural education programs. Currently, there is a significant need to continue the development of instructional materials for bilingual students in grades K-12.

**Related Bills:**

None as of 02-06-2009.