

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill No: CS/SB 453

49th Legislature, 1st Session, 2009

Short Title: Public School Science Facilities

Sponsor(s): Senators Timothy Z. Jennings and Howie C. Morales

Analyst: Peter B. van Moorsel

Date: February 13, 2009

**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR SENATE BILL 453**

Bill Summary:

CS/SB 453 authorizes the State Board of Finance to issue and sell severance tax bonds to make grants to build or refurbish and equip public high school science laboratories statewide.

Among its provisions, the bill:

- requires that the Public School Capital Outlay Council (PSCOC) certify to the State Board of Finance when the money from the severance tax bond proceeds is needed to make grants for high school science facilities;
- provides that, if the PSCOC has not certified the need for the issuance of the bonds by the end of FY 11, the authorization for that project is void;
- prohibits severance tax bond proceeds to be used to pay indirect project costs;
- provides that the expenditure appropriation not be subject to a standards-based process, but requires that the PSCOC develop a process to evaluate and prioritize applications made by public high schools for a grant award; and
- requires that school districts that desire a grant submit an application to the PSCOC, and that the application include an assessment of the existing science laboratory and equipment at the high school and the need for new or refurbished laboratory facilities and equipment.

Fiscal Impact:

CS/SB 453 authorizes the State Board of Finance to issue and sell up to \$130.0 million in severance tax bonds for expenditure by the PSCOC in FY 10 and subsequent fiscal years.

The unexpended balance from the severance tax bond proceeds shall revert to the Severance Tax Bonding Fund within six months of completion of the project, but no later than the end of FY 14.

A related bill, SB 378, *Public School Capital Outlay Amendments*, authorizes the PSCOC to allocate up to \$5.0 million annually from the Public School Capital Outlay Fund in FY 09 through FY 12 for renovating and equipping high school science laboratories.

In a November 2008 report to the Legislative Education Study Committee regarding mathematics and science education in New Mexico, the Public Education Department (PED)

cited a survey of high schools that reported \$16.9 million in identified science facility and equipment needs.

Issues:

PED reports that CS/SB 453 would support a recommendation of the PED Mathematics and Science Bureau to “fund new construction and remodeling of high school science laboratory facilities and purchase needed new equipment to support implementation of increased laboratory science graduation requirements.”

Related Bills:

*SB 378 *Public School Capital Outlay Amendments*
HB 250 *Use of Severance Tax Bonding for Schools*