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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/17/09

SPONSOR Heaton LAST UPDATED _____ HB 726

SHORT TITLE Science & Technology Program Operations SB _____

ANALYST Haug

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY09	FY10		
	\$85.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)
 Public Education Department (PED)
 New Mexico State University (NMSU)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 726 would appropriate \$85.0 from the general fund to the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University to provide instructors, transportation and equipment for a science, technology, engineering and mathematics summer program for middle school students in the Artesia, Carlsbad, Dexter, Hagerman, Lake Arthur and Loving school district.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$85.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of Fiscal Year 2010 shall revert to the general fund.

The HED states that this request was not submitted to the HED for review and is not included in the Department's funding recommendation for FY10.

The LFC Appropriation Recommendations, Volume II, pages 364-365 states:

The committee has concerns about 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.

The committee recommendation reduces funding included in the HED request by varying levels from FY09 funding amounts for research projects, public service projects and P-20 pipeline projects focusing on students.

With respect to special projects, higher education institutions advanced 114 proposals for new projects and expansions at a total general fund cost of \$54 million during the HED budget request process in fall 2008.

According to the February 2008 revenue estimate, FY10 recurring revenue will only support a base expenditure level that is \$575 million less than the FY09 appropriations before the 2009 solvency reductions. All appropriations outside of the general appropriation act will be viewed in this declining revenue context.

The Executive Budget in Brief notes that over the years more than 300 RPSPs have been created, accounting for a large portion of institution budgets. The current RPSPs were reviewed while considering the relevance of the project to the core mission of the institution, the community benefit and the outcomes associated with each project. (Budget in Brief and Policy Highlights, P 9-10.)

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

NMSU states that:

This request will serve as an expansion to the Carlsbad area of the Pre-Freshman Engineering Program (PREP) at NMSU College of Engineering, and will increase K-12 and community outreach and training programs state wide.

New Mexico needs to improve K-12 education and student retention in order to ensure a continuing pipeline for future leaders in the technical, science, and engineering areas. Additionally due to various emerging environmental regulations, rural communities throughout New Mexico need to receive on-going training, education and outreach on the potential impact of the new regulations on their community. This bill would provide funds to initiate the expansion of this statewide K-12 program for middle and high school students, as well as rural communities throughout the state starting with Carlsbad, Artesia, Lake Arthur, Hagerman, Loving and Dexter. The program would be delivered by New Mexico State University's College of Engineering.

PREP recruits high-achieving pre-college students for a six-week academically intense, high school credit awarding, summer program. PREP offers the participants special courses in logic, algebraic structures, physics and technical writing. Problem solving seminars equip them with the necessary tools to complete pre-calculus/calculus in high school. Through field trips and career awareness seminars, students meet professionals who instill the fortitude to become the

scientific leaders of tomorrow. Over the past decade, over 800 mid-school and high school students from Hatch, Las Cruces, and Gadsden have successfully completed some level of PREP. Of those that are eligible to graduate from high school and completing the survey, 201 of the students are currently in college and 100% of the students that finish PREP are high school graduates. 90% of those in college are enrolled at NMSU. We are requesting state funding to continue this program in future years; expand access to the program to additional students; and include program delivery in Carlsbad, Artesia, Lake Arthur, Hagerman, Loving and Dexter. We envision developing PREP into a fully state-wide program in future years.

The PED notes that NMSU has been actively involved in efforts to improve Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) education. They have received federal and state funds for various STEM teacher professional development and student enrichment programs. A member of NMSU's Department of Mathematical Sciences serves on the state Math and Science Advisory Council and one of their College of Education faculty members is an alternate to that Council.

The PED states that this legislation would contribute to the performance measure of the percent of middle school students who achieve a level of proficient or above on the New Mexico Standards-Based Assessment (NMSBA) in math. This legislation supports Goal 1 of PED's *A Strategic Action Plan for Advancing Math and Science Education in New Mexico 2007-2010* : "Increase student interest, participation and achievement in math and science". This legislation supports recommendations in *NM Project 2012*, which focus on using problem-solving, inquiry-based curricula.

GH/svb