

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 336

51st Legislature, 1st Session, 2013

Tracking Number: .192060.1

Short Title: Homeless & Runaway Youth Transitional Living

Sponsor(s): Representative Georgene Louis and Others

Analyst: James Ball

Date: February 14, 2013

Bill Summary:

HB 336 makes an appropriation to provide a transitional living program to children who are aging out of foster care and to homeless and runaway youth who are 16 to 21 years old in Bernalillo County. The program must offer:

- temporary shelter;
- board;
- living skills education;
- behavioral health services; and
- social services.

Fiscal Impact:

\$200,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) for expenditure in FY 14. Unexpended or unencumbered funds revert to the General Fund.

Substantive Issues:

According to DFA, federal funding for services for homeless youth and those aging out of foster care was lost in 2013. Currently, funding for such services comes only from Optum Health (Medicaid reimbursement), for four months of services per client. As a result, services have been significantly cut back. DFA states, however, that services are available in Bernalillo County to address the need identified in HB 336.

Background:

According to the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD), the Albuquerque Public Schools reports that approximately 7,000 youth, age 18 and younger, are homeless. Many have been abused, neglected, exploited, with some experiencing severe emotional problems, and some are just beginning to run into trouble with the juvenile justice system, often leading to the adult justice system. Others have run away from unhealthy homes.

CYFD also states that the Albuquerque Police Department reports receiving on average of 1,300 calls regarding missing or runaway youth annually. Each year approximately 400 youth in New Mexico transition from either the foster care or Juvenile Justice Services.

CYFD cites a 2011 study of youth who have aged out of foster care showing that:

- 50 percent continue to struggle with having enough to eat and pay rent;
- 40 percent of young males are unemployed;
- 66 percent of young women become pregnant;
- 20 percent continue to be homeless; and
- 40 percent by age 23 do not have a GED or diploma.

CYFD also notes that it has been shown that stable housing supports transition age youth to:

- achieve other important life goals;
- improve physical and behavioral health;
- obtain an education, job training, or employment; and
- increase their self-sufficiency, allowing them to become part of their community.

Committee Referrals:

HHGIC/HAFC

Related Bills:

SB 50 *Rapid Re-Housing of Certain Homeless Persons*

SB 288A *Homeless Youth Transitional Living Program* (Identical)