

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: SB 89a

52nd Legislature, 1st Session, 2015

Tracking Number: .198346.1

Short Title: UNM Brain Safe Program

Sponsor(s): Senator Mark Moores

Analyst: James Ball

Date: March 5, 2015

AS AMENDED

The Senate Education Committee amendments expand the effective period of the appropriation from FY 16 alone to a three-year period from FY 16 through FY 18, at which time any amount remaining unexpended or unencumbered shall revert to the General Fund.

Original Bill Summary:

SB 89 makes an appropriation for the Brain Safe Program (BSP) for the safety of athletes at the University of New Mexico (UNM).

Fiscal Impact:

\$3.0 million is appropriated from the General Fund to the Board of Regents of UNM for expenditure in FY 16. Unexpended or unencumbered funds revert to the General Fund.

Fiscal Issues:

According to the fiscal impact report (FIR) from the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC), UNM requested funding for the BSP through the budget process of the Higher Education Department (HED). The request was for \$1.0 million in General Fund support, for a total project request of \$3.0 million over three fiscal years. The FIR indicates that \$2.7 million of this amount would support costs associated with brain imaging sequences of athletes, with the balance covering costs of researchers and the project coordinator.

Neither HED, nor LFC, nor the Executive recommends funding for BPS in FY 16.

Substantive Issues:

According to HED, the BSP seeks to address growing concerns around sports-related brain injuries in student athletes by performing cognitive and behavioral assessments as well as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of all UNM football, volleyball, soccer, basketball, and cheer squad members prior to the beginning of each sport season. Athletes who suffer concussions during the season would be given post-injury MRI scans and follow-up scans as necessary. The BSP would also support a similar project at a local high school.

Background:

The analysis of SB 89 by HED notes that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that 300,000 sport-related traumatic brain injuries, predominantly concussions, occur annually in the United States. For young people ages 15 to 24, sports activities are second only to motor vehicle crashes as the leading cause of traumatic brain injury. Studies of high school and collegiate athletes indicate that cumulative detrimental effects may result from three or more concussive episodes.

Committee Referrals:

SEC/SFC

Related Bills:

None as of March 5, 2015