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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Shendo **ORIGINAL DATE** 2/4/15
LAST UPDATED _____ **HB** _____

SHORT TITLE NMHU Native American Social Work Institute **SB** 324

ANALYST Chavez

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY15	FY16		
	\$120.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates House Bill 280

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 324 appropriates one \$120 thousand from the General Fund to New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU) to create the Native American Social Work Studies Institute at the NMHU Albuquerque campus. The purpose of the institute is to invigorate the social work system for Native Americans in New Mexico and to prepare social work professionals, both Native American and non-Native American, for work in Native American communities on- and off-reservation.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$120 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense from the general fund. As stated in the bill, any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY16 shall revert to the general fund. However, should the appropriation be included in Section 4 of the General Appropriation Act as a line-item to each institution, the funds would not revert to the general fund.

This request was not submitted by NMHU to the New Mexico Higher Education Department

(HED) for review. HED has established a formal process for reviewing earmarked budget requests for higher education institutions. This process requires prior approval by the governing body of the university or college. It also provides for analysis of each request by HED, Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) and LFC. For FY16, the HED did not request, nor did the LFC or Executive recommend, general fund support for these initiatives.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The bill states the institute will serve as an incubator for the development of a Native American core sequence of social work courses by: identifying methodologies and practices that yield positive outcomes and reveal integrative planes of practice across Native American programs; identifying elements of practice for construction of the curriculum; serving as a resource and library for Native American life ways and indigenous practice; establishing a six-member curriculum committee comprised of Apache, Navajo and Pueblo social workers; and identifying and fostering development of Native American faculty to teach native content courses.

HED notes that the need for mental health practitioners and social workers is a crucial national and statewide issue and that the proposed institute would assist Native Americans to deal with mental health problems. HED adds that NMHU may be an appropriate institution to host the initiative as it currently enrolls a significant number of Native Americans.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

NMHU did not provide performance measures. If funded, the institutions and program would be required to provide measures and targets as part of HED's regular budget process.

HED notes NMHU has an established social work program at the Las Vegas campus and the new institute would benefit students at the Albuquerque campus.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The bill includes establishing a six-member curriculum committee comprised of Apache, Navajo and Pueblo social workers. HED recommends that, as the institute is also available for non-Native Americans, a non-Native American be included in the committee.

DUPLICATION

House Bill 280 is a duplicate.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

HED notes the need for Native American social workers in New Mexico may not be fully met. While some Native Americans may attend the social work program at NMHU in Las Vegas, it is not designed specifically to address Native Americans' culture and needs.