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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Muñoz ORIGINAL DATE 2/9/17  
LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB \_\_\_\_\_  
SHORT TITLE Restrict Certain Higher Ed Expenditures SB 243  
ANALYST Dulany

### ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY17	FY18	FY19	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
<b>Total</b>		NFI				

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

*Santa Fe New Mexican*

University of New Mexico (UNM)

### Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

SB 243 prohibits expenditure of public funds by a state higher educational institutions for the purpose of looking for or catching a fictitious creature, including bigfoot, sasquatch, yeti, abominable snowman, Pokémon, leprechauns, or bogeyman.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

No fiscal implications.

### SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

HED points out SB 243 does not define the standards or criteria by which a creature may be determined to be fictitious. HED further notes matters of academic freedom are often determined at the institutional level by faculty. This includes peer review of scholarly work. According to HED, these practices are affirmed in the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) policy manual, which outlines within its criteria for accreditation of an institution that faculty are to oversee academic matters.

The term “public funds” could include student fees collected for campus activities at public postsecondary educational institutions. SB 243 could limit a student organization’s ability to use student fees to sponsor some on-campus events.

UNM-Gallup made headlines in late 2016 when it was revealed the executive director of the campus organized a conference and expedition centered on the mythical creature known as Bigfoot. The story was initially reported on KRQE-TV. According to receipts and purchase orders on file with UNM, the total cost was \$7,477.68 in the months of February and March, 2016:

**Summary of Expenditures -- UNM-Gallup Bigfoot Conference**

Category	Vendor	Date	Amount
Advertising	Gallup Independent Ad Buy	2/29/2016	\$1,029.04
Advertising	Gallup Sun Publishing Ad Buy	2/16/2016	\$291.90
Advertising	Navajo Times Ad Buy	1/29/2016	\$652.05
Advertising	Gallup Sun Publishing Ad Buy	3/21/2016	\$536.15
Travel	Lunch for 9 in Cortez, CO -- Follow-up interview with eye witness.	2/27/2016	\$132.45
Travel	Honorarium and travel expenses for Bigfoot speaker Jeffrey Meldrum	2/10/16-2/14/16	\$1,988.00
Travel	Travel to Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Fruitland for Christopher Dyer	2/10/16-2/14/16	\$2,015.45
Misc	Honorarium to Robert Kryder	2/17/2016	\$832.64
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$7,477.68</b>

Source: UNM

The expenses appear to have been paid out of the executive director’s office budget, which included \$25.9 thousand for travel and \$64.7 thousand for supplies and expenses in FY16.

TD/jle