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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Lopez ORIGINAL DATE 2/20/17
LAST UPDATED _____ HM _____
SHORT TITLE Study Grandparents Raising Grandchildren SM 92
ANALYST Chilton

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY17	FY18	FY19	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	NFI	NFI	NFI	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Nearly duplicates House Memorial 58; relates to Senate Joint Memorial 10 and to 2016 Senate Memorial 1

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Aging and Long Term Services Department (ALTSD)
Office of the Attorney General (OAG)

Responses Not Received From

Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD)
Human Services Department (HSD)
Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Memorial

Senate Memorial 92 would continue the existence of task force formed pursuant to a 2015 memorial, tasked with expanding resources and assistance available to grandparents raising their own grandchildren. The existing task force delivered recommendations to the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee in 2016

The task force would be composed of members representing

- Pegasus Legal Service for children
- Voices for Children
- The New Mexico coalition of educational leaders

- Court-appointed advocates for children
- New Mexico parent-teacher association
- American Association of Retired Persons
- Las Cumbres Community Services, Inc.
- Human Services Department
- Children, Youth and Families Department
- Public Education Department
- Aging and Long-Term Services Department
- Office of the Attorney General
- 2 members from the general public

The task force, which would be coordinated and staffed by ALTSD, CYFD and HSD and would report on recommended policies and resources to the Legislative Committee on Health and Human Services by November 2017.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

No fiscal impact other than the participation of agency staff members in the taskforce.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

In November 2016, the Taskforce on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren presented an extensive report on its deliberations to that point, with a large number of recommendations as to policy and also four possible legislative approaches to aid grandparents put into the position of raising their grandchildren. The four items of proposed legislation were

1. A possible appropriation bill to create a statewide network of services for grandparents raising their grandchildren (See Senate Bill 446.).
2. Revision of a caregiver's authorization affidavit to make it easier for kinship caregivers, including grandparents, to enroll their children in preschools and schools, as well as to authorize healthcare. (See House Bill 394 and Senate Bill 447.)
3. A bill to allow grandparents to access child care assistance funds regardless of the grandparents' income.
4. This memorial to extend the life of the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Taskforce for another year, as expressed below in the taskforce's report (House Memorial 58, Senate Joint Memorial 10, Senate Memorial 92):

The members of the Taskforce request that the taskforce be extended for an additional year to continue to study and recommend concrete policy changes that could be implemented to expand the availability of resources and assistance to grandparents raising grandchildren, including financial resources; legal services; food and housing assistance; and programs relating to medical care, childcare, transportation and education.

OAG notes that there were 56,000 New Mexico children living with grandparents at the time of the 2010 census. Grandparents raising grandchildren may have needs in the general areas of financial resources, legal services, childcare and school, difficulty meeting food and housing needs, obtaining medical care and transportation, among other things.

ALTSD notes that grandparents take on raising grandchildren with little advance notice or training, and lack resources to do it well. Legal guardianship of these children is a necessary step; ALTSD contracts with Pegasus Legal Services in Albuquerque to make this possible.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

ALTSD, CYFD and HSD would be charged with convening and staffing the continuation of the committee.

NEAR DUPLICATION of House Memorial 58 except that Senate Memorial 92 adds a phrase “and, particularly, the provision of maintenance payment for the care and support of children placed in the care of a kinship caregiver,” (regarding resources that the task force should study) which is not contained in House Memorial 58.

RELATES to Senate Joint Memorial 10, which honors grandparents caring for their grandchildren and to 2016 Senate Memorial 1, which established the taskforce one year ago.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS MEMORIAL

The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Taskforce would cease to exist, and opportunities for providing more services and resources to the 56,000 children in grandparent care and to the grandparents assuming that duty might be lost. In the absence of such resources, it is possible that some grandparents might have to place more children in the care of CYFD.

LAC/al