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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Armstrong, G ORIGINAL DATE 02/18/21
LAST UPDATED _____ HM 2
SHORT TITLE Public Health Task Force SB _____
ANALYST Klundt

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY21	FY22	FY23	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total		\$22.3		\$22.3	Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From
Department of Health (DOH)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Memorial 2 (HM2) proposes the Department of Health convene a public health task force to recommend strategies for improving public health infrastructure, with the potential to improve the health of New Mexicans, and reduce costs.

The public health task force would study public health infrastructure and procedures, including the public health workforce, the status of the social determinants of health, laws that protect the public health, and other areas. It would request that the task force include participants from relevant state agencies, local and county governments, academic programs, and nonprofit organizations.

The report from the task force would be presented to the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee by December 1, 2021.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

DOH reported to meet the requirements set forth in this memorial senior staff with public health experience including the Epidemiology and Response Program, Public Health Program, Scientific Laboratory Program, and perhaps other DOH programs may be required. The department estimated this may cost an estimated \$13.3 thousand. In addition, the department also reported an

additional part time FTE would be necessary to support the department at an estimated cost of \$9 thousand. In total, DOH reported an estimated additional operating budget impact of \$22.3 thousand.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Public health is the practice of preventing disease and promoting good health within groups of people ([Public Health Infrastructure \(ncsl.org\)](#)). Investing in disease prevention is the most effective way to improve health, sparing people from developing preventable illnesses, reducing healthcare costs, and improving the productivity of the workforce. ([Investing in America's Health: A State-by-State Look at Public Health Funding and Key Health Facts - tfah](#))

New Mexico's most recent State Health Assessment reports that New Mexico has much higher rates than found nationally for unintentional injuries which includes drug overdose, motor vehicle injuries and older adult falls. New Mexico also has substantially higher death rates than those of the U.S. for suicide and for cirrhosis and chronic liver disease, which is primarily due to alcohol use. In addition, poverty is relatively common in New Mexico and those who live in poverty generally have worse health status. American Indians and Alaska Natives in New Mexico are the racial group with the highest overall death rates and the shortest life expectancy, which are driven by alcohol-related disease and injury. Rural areas in New Mexico are on the wrong end of many health disparities in New Mexico and, overall, persons living there have a shorter life expectancy due in part to higher smoking rates and less access to care ([State of Health in New Mexico, 2018 - NMDOH](#)). Trust for America's Health also reports that New Mexico's public health outcomes stack up unevenly against those of the United States. Some issues that it identifies includes a need to strengthen preparedness for public health emergencies. In addition, deaths from drug misuse, alcohol, and suicide outpace the country as a whole. ([New Mexico - tfah](#))

Public health infrastructure has three components: a capable and qualified workforce, up-to-date integrated information systems, and agency ability to respond to public health needs ([Public Health Infrastructure | Healthy People 2020](#)). That infrastructure is the foundation for planning, delivering, evaluating, and improving public health. Accurate, relevant, and timely data are needed to inform public health action. Changes in the health system and other factors are prompting new roles for public health agencies, a growing focus on the integration of public health and primary care, a deeper examination of financing options for foundational or core services, and new strategies to deliver services more efficiently and effectively ([Public Health Infrastructure | Healthy People 2020](#)). Therefore, efforts to identify ways to improve public health infrastructure should help to improve the overall health and prosperity of New Mexicans.

KK/sb