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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/22/21

SPONSOR Pinto LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB \_\_\_\_\_

SHORT TITLE Tohatchi Public Safety Complex SB 399/ec

ANALYST Nichols

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY21	FY22		
	\$5,960.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Indian Affairs Department (IAD)

No Response Received

Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)

### SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 399 appropriates \$5.96 million from the general fund to the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) for FY22 to plan, construct, and equip a public safety complex in the Tohatchi Chapter of Navajo Nation, in McKinley County. The planning and construction would include rights of way, easements, archaeological and environmental studies, abatement, and demolition. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY22 would revert to the general fund.

This bill contains an emergency clause and would become effective immediately upon signature by the governor.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$5.96 million contained in this bill is a nonrecurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY22 will revert to the general fund.

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

The Indian Affairs Department (IAD) notes that SB399 duplicates the Navajo Nation's capital outlay request received by IAD, with minor changes. SB399 appropriates \$264 thousand more for the project and would only allow for expenditure in FY22, rather than four years for the capital outlay request. It is not clear if planning, construction, and equipping of a public safety complex could be completed within one fiscal year.

## **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

Construction of a public safety complex could improve access to emergency and medical services in the Tohatchi Chapter.

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

Tohatchi is approximately 25 miles from Gallup, with a population of over 1,800 residents. According to IAD, in the event of an emergency, a resident must currently place separate calls to both Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the fire department, which are currently housed miles apart, resulting in delays in emergency response. Construction of a public safety complex in the community could reduce response time and improve access to emergency services in the community.

IAD notes that as sovereign nations, tribes have the authority and responsibility to protect the public health and welfare of their citizens, and should engage in preparedness and response activities using methods most appropriate for and preferred by their communities. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated tribal communities' existing systemic challenges, particularly related to access to medical care, including emergency medical care.

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