

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:
Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: HB 347 appropriates ten million dollars from the general fund to the higher education department (HED) for expenditure in fiscal years 2026 and 2027 to provide scholarships, other student financial aid, and paid practicums for students in bachelor's and master's degree programs in behavioral health fields, including substance addiction counseling, at state universities and tribal colleges in New Mexico. The goal is to expand enrollment and increase the number of graduates in behavioral health fields in New Mexico. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2027 reverts to the general fund. The bill requires the HED to distribute funding based on the number of New Mexico residents enrolled in behavioral health programs, including substance addiction counseling programs, in fiscal year 2024. Before making an award, the HED shall require a participating state university or tribal college in New Mexico that offers bachelor's or master's degree programs in behavioral health fields to certify that the funding will be used to supplement, not supplant, current funding and expenditures in those degree programs.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

No obvious implications if the budget allows for this appropriation.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

This could help the health and healthcare workforce shortages by encouraging students to enter into these degree programs and receive funding for their schooling.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

If successful, the state would benefit from having additional providers.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

None noted.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

No obvious conflict or duplication.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

Who will oversee the work of each institution to ensure that the funds are used appropriately?
Will this be a part of the request for funds?

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Is this a sustainable model? More details are needed regarding the definition of behavioral health fields as only one example is provided (substance addiction counseling)

ALTERNATIVES

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

AMENDMENTS