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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/11/09

SPONSOR Picraux LAST UPDATED _____ HB 231

SHORT TITLE Dental Student Slot Increase SB _____

ANALYST Varela

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY09	FY10		
	\$230.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

Department of Health (DOH)

Health Policy Commission (HPC)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 231 appropriates \$230 thousand from the general fund to the Higher Education Department (HED) for the purpose of increasing the number of slots for dental students seeking support from the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE).

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$230 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of 2010 shall revert to the general fund.

According to the December 2008 revenue estimate, FY10 recurring revenue will only support a base expenditure level that is \$293 million, or 2.6 percent, less than the FY09 appropriation. All appropriations outside of the general appropriation act will be viewed in this declining revenue context.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

HED reports in their analysis that the proposed increase represents the cost of 9 additional WICHE Dental slots at nearly \$25 thousand per slot. This bill would bring the total number of new WICHE slots offered each year to 20 slots, increasing the workforce pipeline with well-trained dental professionals who will be obligated to practice in New Mexico for up to 3 years.

According to the New Mexico Health Resources office, there are approximately 75 vacancies in dental positions statewide in community health centers, Indian Health Service and the private sector. The decreasing number of dentists practicing in the United States is projected to grow each year. The decrease in dental professionals impacts New Mexico harder than most states due to the growing population and shrinking dental workforce. During the 2008-2009 application process, HED received 49 WICHE dentistry applications of which 14 were funded due to limited funds.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

This bill relates to the FY10 LFC recommended level of funding for the WICHE program.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The HPC reported in the 2008 New Mexico Geographic Access Data System (GADS), information concerning national and local rates. According to that report:

- New Mexico had a rate of 44.2 dentists per 100,000 individuals
- The national rate was 66.3 dentists per 100,000 individuals
- Colorado had a rate of 70.7 dentists per 100,000 individuals
- Texas had a rate of 50.7 dentists per 100,000 individuals

According to the American Dental Association (ADA) there are 56 dental schools in the United States and no dental schools in New Mexico.

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