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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2-27-09

SPONSOR HHGAC LAST UPDATED _____ HB 367 HHGACS

SHORT TITLE Limit Electronic Records SB _____

ANALYST Ortiz

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY09	FY10		
NFI	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

The House Health and Government Affairs Committee substitute for House Bill 367 would amend NMSA Section 2-3-14.1A relating to reports submitted by state agencies to the Legislature, to provide no state agency shall send any material in excess of five pages, with the exception of proposed legislation, unless the material is in electronic form or is specifically requested by a member to be in printed form. Legislative Council Services is directed to compile a list of the reports received submitted and distribute it to legislators the first week of the session. Legislators requesting a report from the list shall receive it in electronic form unless the legislator prefers it in print form. The amendment also updates language and strikes language to correspond with electronic form requirement.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

A myriad of agencies provided their analysis of the original bill, some of which remained relevant to the substitution, including examples of the vast information and services they already provide electronically. Some agencies explain that they rarely send out information and the bill would have little effect on them administratively or financially. The substitution to the original bill seems to adequately address the concerns expressed by other agencies perhaps with the exception of that related to email addresses. The specific issue surrounded situations where an agency does not have record of an email address for the intended recipient. It presumably will require the agency to send unrequested information by mail.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The AOC recognizes that in this tight budget environment, the motivation of HB 367 is probably to create savings. Nevertheless, the agency has many concerns about a blanket prohibition on the distribution of printed materials. The science of reading, retaining and understanding words shown on the computer screen, as opposed to printed on paper, is still developing, but currently appears to show that it is harder for people to process text on the computer screen than in books or other printed format. The difficulty stems partially from the resolution on the computer screen not being as clear as the printed word, and also because of the other processes required for computer-screen reading – such as scrolling down or back up the page, moving from one page to the next page – processes that interfere with the normal processes used in reading the printed word.

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