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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/2/09

SPONSOR JM Gutierrez LAST UPDATED _____ HB 446

SHORT TITLE Dona Ana Court Advocates Program SB _____

ANALYST C. Sanchez

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY09	FY10		
\$0	\$100	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)
Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court (BCMC)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 446 appropriates \$100.0 in recurring general funds to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) for Court Appointed Special Advocates programs (CASA) in Dona Aña County. CASA volunteers are trained community volunteers that act as advocates to abused and neglected children. Local CASA programs work at the will of the court to serve as additional eyes and ears for the court and to prompt the system to do its job.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The \$100.0 will be distributed from the general fund directly to the Administrative Office of the Courts. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2009 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

This appropriation of \$100.0 is not part of the Judiciary's Unified Budget. The New Mexico CASA Network recommends funding for CASA programs to the AOC based on a formula that measures cases served and volunteers assigned. Additional funding would help them train more volunteers and serve more children who have been abused or neglected.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Status Quo

CS/mc