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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/20/09

SPONSOR Wallace LAST UPDATED _____ HB 730

SHORT TITLE Northern New Mexico College Hazmat Training SB _____

ANALYST Haug

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY09	FY10		
	\$113.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

Department of Public Safety (DPS)

Northern New Mexico College (NNMC)

Homeland Security and Emergency Management Department (HSEMD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 730 appropriates \$113.0 thousand from the general fund to the Board of Regents of Northern New Mexico College to provide science based hazardous materials decontamination evaluation, training and equipment statewide to volunteer and full time emergency response agencies.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$113.0 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of Fiscal Year 2010 shall revert to the general fund.

The HED states that this request was submitted by NNMC to the HED for review in the amount of \$134.0 thousand. The Department would have a neutral recommendation for this project for FY10, if the State's fiscal outlook improves.

The LFC Appropriation Recommendations, Volume II, pages 364-365 states:

The committee has concerns about the growth of research and public service projects within the higher education budget, as well as the alignment of these projects with state goals and strategic plans. The committee also continues to have significant concerns about accountability and performance outcomes for these projects.

The committee recommendation reduces funding included in the HED request by varying levels from FY09 funding amounts for research projects, public service projects and P-20 pipeline projects focusing on students.

With respect to special projects, higher education institutions advanced 114 proposals for new projects and expansions at a total general fund cost of \$54 million during the HED budget request process in fall 2008.

According to the February 2009 revenue estimate, FY10 recurring revenue will only support a base expenditure level that is \$575 million less than the FY09 appropriations before the 2009 solvency reductions. All appropriations outside of the general appropriation act will be viewed in this declining revenue context.

The Executive Budget in Brief notes that over the years more than 300 RPSPs have been created, accounting for a large portion of institution budgets. The current RPSPs were reviewed while considering the relevance of the project to the core mission of the institution, the community benefit and the outcomes associated with each project. (Budget in Brief and Policy Highlights, P 9-10.)

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

NNMC states that:

Northern New Mexico College provides exclusive science-based hazardous materials decontamination evaluation, training and equipment statewide to volunteer and full-time emergency response agencies. This training is not available elsewhere in New Mexico. This proprietary hazmat training is so exclusive that Federal Government Agencies have sent numerous Federal Military and non-military emergency response personnel for this training. Northern New Mexico College offers this training at a substantially reduced cost to participant agencies, as compared to comparable hazmat training available nationally.

Northern's Hazmat training for New Mexico First Responders is designed to test hazardous materials response skills and simulates several hazardous materials incidents. In the past training has included simulated responses to: Chemical identification in a clandestine drug labs, biological identification in a sick patient, confined space rescue, off-loading materials from an overturned tanker, complex valve and piping leaks, a railcar crash, a radiological incident and an overturned tanker spill.

No other sources exist in the State of New Mexico or outside of New Mexico that are equipped and have the knowledge to conduct the same designed hazardous materials response skills training and simulations.

The HSEMD states that This program could be a useful adjunct to the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management's (DHSEM). The Northern New Mexico College should coordinate with DHSEM's Hazardous Materials Coordinator to ensure the program meets nationally recognized standards for certification. It would be beneficial to offer this specialized decontamination training due to its innovative design. There is existing awareness and operational level training offered to all first responders by the State Fire Academy. Free and/or low cost higher level training opportunities are also available through the federal Department of Homeland Security Training Consortium, including TEEK in College Station, TX and the Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, AL.

GH/mt