

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 69a

51st Legislature, 1st Session, 2013

Tracking Number: .190712.1

Short Title: UNM Health Center College of Public Health

Sponsor(s): Representative Mimi Stewart and Others

Analyst: Mark Murphy

Date: February 13, 2013

FOR THE LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

AS AMENDED

The House Education Committee amendment:

- **adds to the stated purpose of the appropriation that the University of New Mexico's Health Sciences Center work in collaboration with New Mexico State University to plan a college of public health.**

Original Bill Summary:

HB 69 makes an appropriation to the University of New Mexico's Health Sciences Center (HSC) to plan a College of Public Health.

Fiscal Impact:

\$250,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Board of Regents of the University of New Mexico (UNM) for FY 14. This is a one-time, nonrecurring appropriation. Any unexpended or unencumbered funds at the end of FY 14 will revert to the General Fund.

Substantive Issues:

According to the UNM bill analysis, compared to other states across the nation, New Mexico is ranked as:

- first in drug overdose death rate;
- third in lack of health insurance coverage;
- fifth in poor mental health;
- seventh in inadequate immunization coverage; and
- eighth in untreated dental decay.

According to the New Mexico Higher Education Department (HED) bill analysis:

- obtaining funding to plan a College of Public Health is a legislative priority for UNM;
- the existing Public Health Program at UNM is accredited by the Council of Education for Public Health (CEPH) only for Master's level training in three fields;

- the objective for UNM is to offer additional degrees at the Baccalaureate level and three PhD programs in order to become accredited as a College of Public Health by CEPH;
- US census data from 2010 indicates that there is a critical healthcare workforce shortage in 31 of the 33 New Mexico counties;
- ameliorating this healthcare workforce shortage, which is growing by attrition, requires that New Mexico strengthen the number of and capabilities of public health professionals;
- the UNM president has stated that “New Mexico has critical public health needs” and that UNM is “uniquely positioned to establish a College of Public Health that will both train students and serve the needs of New Mexico”; and
- UNM submitted a request for \$250,000 to HED for review, but HED did not recommend an increase in funding for this project.

Background:

In 2012, HM 43 passed the House, which requested that HED study the feasibility of establishing a school of public health in New Mexico.

According to the DOH bill analysis, public health is the practice of preventing disease and promoting good health within groups of people from small communities to entire countries. Rather than being a single discipline, public health includes professionals from many fields with the common purpose of protecting the health of a population. The public health workforce includes:

- epidemiologists;
- health educators;
- communicators;
- researchers;
- administrators;
- environmentalists;
- demographers;
- social workers;
- laboratory scientists; and
- attorneys.

UNM currently has a Public Health Program within the Department of Family and Community Medicine, which is a part of the School of Medicine. According to the UNM bill analysis, approximately one student per year graduates with a graduate level degree in Public Health from the current program, which offers:

- a Master’s of Public Health degree; and/or
- Certificates of Public Health.

Committee Referrals:

HEC/HAFC

Related Bills:

HB 26 *UNM Land Grant Studies Program*

HB 80 *UNM Dental Science Program*

SB 55 *UNM Architecture School Community Outreach*

SB 56 *UNM Health Center Project ECHO*
SB 57 *UNM Health Center Nursing Enrollment*
SB 78 *UNM Family-Friendly Workplace Task Force*
SB 87 *UNM Health Workforce Analysis*
SB 97 *Expand Health Focus Centers*
SB 123 *UNM Health Center Autopsy Transport*
SB 216 *ENMU Master's of Nursing Program*