

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 538

51st Legislature, 1st Session, 2013

Tracking Number: .192057.1

Short Title: Native American Language Teacher Development

Sponsor(s): Representatives Rick S. Miera, Sandra D. Jeff, Sharon Clahchischilliage, James Roger Madalena, and Other

Analyst: James Ball

Date: February 20, 2013

Bill Summary:

HB 538 makes an appropriation to:

- provide professional development and best practices in language instruction for Native language teachers in public schools;
- technical assistance to tribes for language planning;
- language program development and evaluation;
- community leadership development; and
- community-based collaborative research for tribes regarding appropriate models for Native language maintenance and revitalization.

Fiscal Impact:

\$500,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Board of Regents of the University of New Mexico (UNM) for expenditure in FY 14. Unexpended or unencumbered funds revert to the General Fund.

Substantive Issues:

According to UNM:

- the maintenance and preservation of Native American languages is critical to the survival of the 22 Native American tribes and pueblos in New Mexico;
- language is the essential linkage between culture and religion in most Native societies and acts as the agent by which the traditions of tribes and pueblos are transmitted to future generations; and
- Native languages are endangered because of the effects of:
 - larger cultural influences that have made English the primary and dominant language of pueblo children;
 - the lack of qualified Native language speakers; and
 - the lack of curriculum and instructional strategies for the teaching of Native languages.

Background:

The American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center at the UNM College of Education, was established in 2008, is the only center of its kind in the country that provides critical services and training to Native language teachers. According to their website, the center aims to serve as a local and national center of collaborative research to examine major policy issues affecting the survival and maintenance of Native languages. A key component of the center's outreach is developing and providing Native language teacher training programs and technical assistance support for tribes and pueblos engaged in language maintenance and preservation.

Committee Referrals:

HHGIC/HAFC

Related Bills:

None as of 2/20/2013.