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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

**SPONSOR**     Stansbury/Ferrary, Bash/ Armstrong, G.     **ORIGINAL DATE**     1/30/20  
**LAST UPDATED**     1/31/20     **HM**     6

**SHORT TITLE**     Task Force to Address Barriers to Food Access     **SB**     \_\_\_\_\_

**ANALYST**     Esquibel

### ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY20	FY21	FY22	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
<b>Total</b>	\$20.0	\$55.0		\$75.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSD)

Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD)

Department of Health (DOH)

Human Services Department (HSD)

Indian Affairs Department (IAD)

New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA)/New Mexico State University(NMSU)

University of New Mexico (UNM)

University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center (UNMHSC)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Memorial 6 (HM6) requests the secretary of the Human Services Department (HSD) to convene a task force to study and assess hunger, malnutrition, food production and distribution; assess existing data; and identify the state's barriers to ensuring that all New Mexicans have access to a nutritious and sufficient diet.

I. The task force would be composed of representatives from the:

A. Human Services Department;

B. Department of Health;

**House Memorial 6 – Page 2**

- C. Aging and Long-Term Services Department;
- D. New Mexico Department of Agriculture;
- E. Children, Youth and Families Department;
- F. University of New Mexico;
- G. New Mexico State University;
- H. New Mexico State University Agricultural Experiment Station;
- I. Office of the Governor;
- J. Indian Affairs Department;
- K. New Mexico Association of Food Banks;
- L. Public Education Department;
- M. Food, hunger and nonprofit organizations; and
- N. Higher Education Department.

II. The task force would be requested to examine the best available data and assess:

- A. the incidence of hunger and malnutrition;
- B. causes and ramifications of hunger and malnutrition;
- C. public awareness of the characteristics of a healthy and nutritious diet and the consequences of maintaining an unhealthy diet;
- D. publicly funded meal programs, including those provided in schools, senior centers and facilities and intergenerational summer meal programs;
- E. the ability of residents to access and purchase healthy and nutritious foods;
- F. food production and agriculture in New Mexico;
- G. infrastructure for food produced in New Mexico;
- H. transportation and distribution of food products to processors and markets;
- I. the distance of food retailers from households relative to where the population lives;
- J. the ability of households, emergency food providers, and agricultural producers to safely store perishable food; and
- K. public and private nutrition assistance programs.

III. Through identifying and analyzing the best available data, the task force would be requested to identify:

- A. the scope, causes and ramifications of hunger and malnutrition in New Mexico;
- B. policies and programs addressing hunger that could be improved;
- C. policies and programs that address and provide recommendations for intergenerational meal programs;
- D. charitable efforts that may assist in addressing hunger;
- E. ways to strengthen the relationships between New Mexico food production, food retail and publicly funded meal programs;
- F. methods of improving statewide infrastructure to address these interrelated problems; and
- G. methods of improving data and information sharing systems across industries and sectors that collect food, hunger, malnutrition and agriculture data to facilitate monitoring, analysis and problem solving to strengthen local food systems and reduce hunger and malnutrition.

## **House Memorial 6 – Page 3**

House Memorial 6 requests the task force to report its findings and recommendations to the Office of the Governor and the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee by November 1, 2020.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

The memorial does not include an appropriation.

The Human Services Department indicates implementation of HM6 would require two full-time HSD staff to dedicate half their time to the efforts of the task force for the duration of the project which ends November 2020. HSD projects its staffing needs for the task force would include an Administrative Operations Manager I and an Economist-Operational for project management oversight, analysis of policies and programs, and data analysis. Two HSD employees (pay band 70) dedicating 50 percent of their time would cost \$35.8 thousand each, for a total of \$71.6 thousand.

The New Mexico Department of Agriculture, UNM Health Sciences Center, and Children, Youth and Families Department all indicate there would also be some nominal cost associated with their staff participating in the task force for a total of approximately \$3.4 thousand.

The Legislative Finance Committee and Executive recommendations for FY21 for the Human Services Department both include recurring expansion funding of \$1.49 million for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Heat and Eat initiative, an energy and food assistance benefit for some households with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps). The additional general fund revenue can generate up to \$18 million in federal funds.

### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

The Indian Affairs Department notes the 23 Tribal Nations have been supported by a variety of grants from CYFD, tribal grants, USDA, and state grants, but not all tribes receive these grants such as the Jircarilla Apache Nation, which does not have facilities to prepare and provide meals to children.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

The University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center (UNMHSC) indicates its faculty and staff could make important contributions to the task force including providing technical assistance regarding the synthesis of research, evaluation and quality improvement findings related to screening for, documenting, treating and preventing food insecurity in New Mexico. If the task force requested UNMHSC to undertake new research, it would be necessary to consider how those projects would be funded and staffed. Costs would also be incurred for attending meetings outside of Albuquerque and faculty and staff time.

### **CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

HM6 relates to HB75 that would appropriate \$200 thousand from the general fund to the Human Service Department to convene a task force to study hunger in New Mexico.

HM6 relates to SM3 which both propose the convening of working groups to examine food insecurity and food access issues in New Mexico. HM6 delineates research and recommendation approaches, while SM3 focuses on developing recommendations on how best to coordinate with farmers to glean unharvested produce and efficiently distribute it.

## TECHNICAL ISSUES

CYFD notes on page 4, line 8, HM6 asks that “food, hunger and nonprofit organizations” sit on the taskforce. It is unclear whether the food and hunger organizations may be for-profit; whether the food and hunger organizations should be non-profit; and whether the nonprofit organizations are separate from the food and hunger organizations.

CYFD suggests the Early Childhood Education and Care Department be added to the task force members.

## OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Hunger Free America issued a report citing that 25 percent of children (121,719) in New Mexico from 2016 through 2018 lived in households that couldn't always afford sufficient food. The report also found that 13.8 percent of working adults (120,677), and nearly 12 percent of seniors (57,482), were hungry during 2016 through 2018. According to the report, the total number of food insecure individuals in New Mexico from 2016 through 2018 was 374,105, 18.3 percent of the state population, making it the most food insecure state in the country. The report recommends raising wages and ensuring the federal nutrition assistance safety net is adequately funded, easy accessible, and includes benefits such as SNAP, meals on wheels and senior center meals for older Americans, WIC for pregnant women and infants, and school breakfasts, lunches, and summer meals for children.

The Department of Health indicates *Feeding America's* “Map the Meal Gap” 2016 study identified 327,930 people in New Mexico struggling with hunger, including 125,210 children. This equates to 1 out of every 6 New Mexicans suffering from some level of food insecurity. This study also ranks New Mexico as 1<sup>st</sup> in the nation for childhood hunger and 2<sup>nd</sup> for hunger in the general population.

According to the United Health Foundation, in 2018, 27.2 percent of children in New Mexico younger than the age of 18 live in households below the poverty threshold.

(<https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/annual/measure/ChildPoverty/state/NM>) Much of New Mexico is considered a food desert according to the United States Department of Agriculture. “Food deserts are defined as parts of the country void of fresh fruit, vegetables, and other healthful whole foods, usually found in impoverished areas. This is largely due to a lack of grocery stores, farmers' markets, and healthy food providers.” (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas/>)