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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR: Campos DATE TYPED: 03/13/01 HB \_\_\_\_\_  
 SHORT TITLE: Geography Education in Public Schools SB 670  
 ANALYST: Gilbert

### APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY01	FY02	FY01	FY02		
	\$ 500.0			Recurring	GF

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files  
 New Mexico Commission for Higher Education (CHE)  
 State Department of Education (SDE)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 670 appropriates \$500.0 to the New Mexico Commission for Higher Education (CHE) for use by the New Mexico Geographic Alliance in order to provide geography education in the state's public schools.

#### Significant Issues

The New Mexico Geographic Alliance has provided professional development through summer institutes since 1991. To date, 220 teachers have participated in summer institutes. Professional activities generated by teacher training institutes has impacted more than 3000 teachers and 50,000 students in New Mexico.

According to the State Department of Education (SDE), this bill would make New Mexico eligible for \$500.0 in matching funds from the National Geographic Society that could be used to establish a permanent fund to support the New Mexico Geographic Alliance. This appropriation would allow New Mexico to model our geographic education after those programs found in Colorado, Oklahoma, Illinois, and Michigan. The National Geographic Society has taken the lead nationally to support geographic education.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$500.0 contained in this bill is a non-recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY02 shall revert to the general fund.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

The CHE is responsible for administrative oversight of this program.

#### **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

According to the SDE, current CTBS Terra Nova testing data indicates that only 50% of New Mexico students in grades 3 through 9 are proficient or above in social studies. These tests include geography at each grade level.

*The following is provided for information only. It is not intended as a commentary on the merits of the program/project:*

According to the CHE, the New Mexico Geographical Alliance (NMGA) is housed and administered at the University of New Mexico (UNM), and until recent years was funded through UNM. This request was not included in UNM's budget request to the CHE for FY02. The NMGA was funded, in part, by the National Geographic Society and has also received funds from Goals 2000, however it was not funded in FY00. It is currently using a small grant from the Eisenhower Professional Development Program.

Additionally, the content area of geography was not identified as a focus area in the *Framework for an Action Plan* which was formally endorsed by the CHE and the SDE. Additionally, all districts have been required to submit professional development plans to the SDE based on identified needs of the districts. Geography was not identified through those plans.