

Significant Issues

The transfer of ambulance regulation has been discussed recently by a special subcommittee of the Legislative Council, called the Public Regulation Commission Subcommittee. The task of the subcommittee was to make recommendation on the structure of the PRC. The conclusion was that the PRC be restructured to focus only on utility and telecommunications regulation. To do this effectively, the non-utility functions from the PRC were recommended to be transferred to other departments. Regulation of ambulance services was identified as non-utility function. The specific recommendation is shown below as reported in the PRC subcommittee report:

Ambulance Services. A 1994 National Highway Traffic Safety assessment for New Mexico recommended ambulance services be transferred to the Emergency Services (EMS) Bureau in the Department of Health. EMS and PRC both support the transfer to better coordinate safety efforts in the state. This coordination would improve services to both the transportation industry and the public. This alternative should also be included in the legislative debate on the creation of a new Homeland Security Department.

Transfer of PRC Resources. HB 653 does not transfer the staff, financial resources or equipment from the PRC to DOH. The PRC employs 1 FTE for regulation of ambulance standards at a cost of \$40.0.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

HB 653 does not contain an appropriation. However, enactment would have a fiscal impact on DOH.

DOH Resource Needs. According to DOH, based upon the planning that was accomplished in the late 1990s, the DOH would require a recurring appropriation of at least \$250,000 and 5 FTE, including program management and actuarial capacity. The first year would also require an additional, one time appropriation of \$50,000 for capital acquisition of two vehicles and computer equipment.

MFV/sb:yr