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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR: Begaye DATE TYPED: 03/14/03 HB HM41

SHORT TITLE: MVD Announcements in Navajo SB _____

ANALYST: Hayes

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY03	FY04	FY03	FY04		
	NFI		See Narrative		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Responses Received From
Motor Vehicle Division, TRD

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Memorial 41 requests that the director of the Motor Vehicle Division, the secretary of the Taxation and Revenue Department and the governor allow for announcements in the Navajo language at Motor Vehicle Division locations in communities with large populations of Navajo speakers.

The request comes because the Navajo Nation has a population of more than 210,000. Navajo is the primary language of tens of thousands of New Mexicans, and many Navajo people are not fluent in English or Spanish and, consequently, have a difficult time obtaining state services.

New Mexico has a rich and vibrant linguistic diversity and a strong history of honoring its linguistic diversity by accommodating the many languages spoken in the state. Moreover, the governor has made improving the lives of New Mexico's native peoples a priority in his administration.

Significant Issues

1. HM 41 is not clear on its meaning of "allow for announcements." Is this regarding writ-

ten materials and flyers/announcements posted at MVD offices? Does this mean hiring Navajo-speaking employees? Or is the request directing MVD to develop drivers' tests in Navajo? Or print the driver's license applications in Navajo? Perhaps the request is intended for all of the aforementioned ideas. Clarification is needed on the legislative intent of "allow for announcements."

2. MVD provided the following information:

<u>County</u>	<u>% Pop. American Indian</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Type of Office</u>	<u># of Navajo Speaking Employees</u>
San Juan	36.9%	Aztec	Municipal	0
		Bloomfield	Municipal	0
		Farmington	MVD	2
McKinley	74.7%	Gallup	MVD	3
Cibola	40.3%	Grants	MVD	0

In the offices operated by the state's Motor Vehicle Division, there are a limited number of employees fluent in Navajo. A person having such capabilities is desired for any openings at the Grants office; however, under current hiring policy, MVD can only make fluency in Navajo a desired qualification and not the sole determinant on hiring.

For the two offices owned and operated by the town of Aztec and Bloomfield, the state can only request that this qualification be considered in the town's hiring process. The state has no authority over municipal hiring practices or policies.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

While this memorial has no specific appropriation or revenue impact, a cost may be incurred by MVD depending on the intent of "allow for announcements."

CMH/njw/ljs