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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Campos DATE TYPED 2/3/04 HB 362

SHORT TITLE Guadalupe County Inmate Medical Care SB _____

ANALYST Johnson

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY04	FY05	FY04	FY05		
	\$400.0			Recurring	GF

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to SB495

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Response Received From
Department of Health

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 362 appropriates \$400,000 from the general fund to the local government division of the department of finance and administration to provide housing and medical care for prison inmates in Guadalupe county.

Significant Issues

The department of health provided the following:

The language in the bill does not make it clear if the proposed appropriation for housing is separate and distinct from funding needed to meet operational costs of housing inmates in the current, privately run correctional facility. There is not enough information provided to evaluate the impact.

Guadalupe County currently is not a designated primary medical care health professional shortage area (HPSA) because the county profile does not meet any of the following three definitions from the federal Department of Health and Human Services: 1) the area has a population to full-

time-equivalent primary care physician ratio of at least 3,500:1; 2) the area has a population to full-time-equivalent primary care physician ratio of at least 3,500:1, but greater than 3,000:1; and 3) the area has unusually high needs for primary care services or insufficient capacity of existing primary care providers. The County, however, is considered a dental HPSA and a partial mental health HPSA.

Local primary care providers and public health district offices may be in a position to assist the County meet the medical needs of its prison inmates through the proposed appropriation. Access to appropriate medical care is necessary for the health status of inmates and to assure that when paroled or released, they have obtained the needed health care and education to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$400.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2005 shall revert to the general fund.

RELATIONSHIP

The bill is a companion to SB495, which is similar to HB362 except SB495 declares an emergency and allows the \$400.0 to be spent in fiscal year 2004.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The department of health provided the following:

The bill would address the medical and housing needs of prison inmates in Guadalupe County. Housing needs are not defined in the bill. It is unclear whether the funds would be used to supplement operational housing costs or include new types of housing, such as transitional living, that would support an inmate upon release rather than having the inmate enter the homeless system if no housing or housing supports would be available upon his release or parole.

Medical needs of the inmates could be met with the proposed funding and the County would need to explore potential partnerships with local public health district offices, primary care clinics and private providers. A successful project in which a public health office is located at the new Bernalillo County Metro Detention Center providing family planning, sexually transmitted and other infectious disease, limited substance abuse, and health education services may be replicated for inmates in Guadalupe County.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Correctional facilities place a recurring and severe strain on several county budgets in New Mexico. What long-term solutions could be explored to deal with this issue?