

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current FIRs (in HTML & Adobe PDF formats) are available on the NM Legislative Website (legis.state.nm.us). Adobe PDF versions include all attachments, whereas HTML versions may not. Previously issued FIRs and attachments may be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Trujillo DATE TYPED 2-2-05 HB 390

SHORT TITLE Statewide Info and Referral Task Force Program SB _____

ANALYST Collard

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY05	FY06	FY05	FY06		
\$300.0				Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates SB 317
Relates to SB 206

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC)
Department of Health (DOH)
Human Services Department (HSD)
Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSD)
Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD)
General Services Department (GSD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 390 appropriates \$300 thousand from the general fund to DDPC for the purpose of establishing a statewide “211” information and referral system for health and human services in FY05 and FY06. The appropriation will be used to establish a task force to develop a comprehensive implementation plan and develop and implement five “211” information and referral centers in the state. This bill contains an emergency clause.

Significant Issues

HSD notes the \$300 thousand appropriation will be added to over \$700 thousand that has been contributed toward a statewide information and referral system by United Way agencies across the state. Currently, 1.1 million people have access to the “211” information and referral system

in limited areas across the state. The appropriation allows the system to expand into additional communities. The appropriation also allows existing communities to expand the hours of operations to seven days a week and twelve hours a day.

Additionally, federal legislation is proposed that, if passed, would match the total public and private partnership funding on a one-to-one basis. If received, a federal match of \$1 million may be recognized to even further expand the "211" network.

As noted in the LFC budget write-up for DDPC, "The first governor's performance review suggested implementing a statewide 2-1-1 network in New Mexico. According to the review, "2-1-1 is the national abbreviated dialing code for free access to health and human services information for referrals, and could replace most of the existing toll-free 800 numbers maintained by New Mexico health and human services agencies." The review placed DDPC in charge of the implementation. To date, DDPC is coordinating with other health and human services agencies, such as the Public Education Department - Special Education Division, the Children, Youth, and Families Department, the Department of Health, and the Office of Workforce Training and Development, to fund and administer the network. Currently, DDPC has negotiated approximately \$72.5 thousand from these agencies. The review calls for the elimination of 30 percent of the existing health and human services toll-free phone lines by FY08."

DOH notes considerations would be needed to accommodate callers who do not speak English. Additionally, a 24-hour nurse health access telephone advice line has been proposed and the "211" information and referral program could provide to or receive referrals from the nurse health advice line.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

DDPC notes the "211" system is a governor's performance review initiative with specific performance indicators including: number of New Mexicans with access to the "211" system, number of calls, caller satisfaction, reduction of non appropriate calls to existing state 1-800 lines. Without this funding, DDPC indicates the performance outcomes will not be met.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$300 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY06 shall revert to the general fund.

DDPC indicates the "211" system has been supported through small amounts of federal grant dollars from DOH, CYFD, HSD, DDPC, and the Public Education Department. The United Ways have contributed over \$700 thousand this year alone. The funds from the various state agencies are a one-time allocation. Without state funding, the public/private partnership will dissolve and this program will be lost. With a recurring allocation of \$300 thousand combined with the United Way funds and the possible federal match of \$1 million, the state will be able to provide this single point of entry to state and non-state services.

ALTSD notes each individual information and referral program operates its own database of services. Moving to a statewide network of information may require additional funding beyond the cost of establishing the task force, creating a statewide plan and establishing the five proposed centers.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

DDPC indicates the agency has been working with ALTSD to either maintain the program at DDPC or move it to ALTSD. Either agency will absorb the administrative cost over and above the operational cost covered in this bill

CYFD notes the department will continue to work with the statewide “211” project to facilitate coordination with the CYFD Statewide Central Intake (SCI) referral system. Coordination between “211” and SCI is critical to assure that emergency calls are properly screened and referred to SCI or law enforcement. When implemented, the “211” project is expected to alleviate SCI from managing approximately 40 thousand annual calls for information and referrals not related to child and adult abuse or neglect or foster parenting.

DUPLICATION, RELATIONSHIP

House Bill 390 duplicates Senate Bill 317.

Additionally, the bill relates to a plethora of introduced bills, such as Senate Bill 206 which would appropriate \$600 thousand from the general fund to DOH for expenditure in fiscal years 2005 and 2006 to contract with a statewide consortium of safety net providers and to establish a twenty-four-hour nurse health access telephone advice line. All lines should be connected to the “211” system.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

ALTSD notes Senate Bill 422, which passed in 2003, created the Information and Referral Task Force with an appropriation of \$150 thousand for fiscal years 2003 and 2004. The current bill requests establishment of the task force and development a comprehensive implementation plan. The partnership with private entities such as United Way, who has led the nationwide “211” initiative, should be clarified. Similarly, the request for monies to develop five “211” centers must be clarified as to whether the funding will go to new communities, or is intended for the establishment and growth of the existing “211” programs.

CYFD notes a statewide “211” planning committee is already established and has been administered through DDPC since 2002. An implementation plan was developed by the committee in September 2004. If the bill intends to fund development of a revised plan, the planning process and implementation of five centers are unlikely to occur within a single funding year.

HSD notes the bill fails to provide specific guidelines concerning how the appropriation is to be used, other than a vague instruction to develop a statewide “211” information and referral system. The bill does not specify the purpose of the statewide system, who will benefit from the system, how it is to be set up and by whom, who will operate the system, who will administer it, who will control the content of the system, etc. Under the bill as drafted, the DDPC has the authority to develop any type of it system it chooses and operate that system as it sees fit.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

DDPC states the “211” system is accessible by phone, internet and walk-in services. State agencies can use “211” to find resources when developing plans under the various state services. For example, a person seeking employment may also need child care, and the case manager can use the “211” system to identify the needed resource to complete the plan and allow the individual to enter employment.

DOH indicates "211" telephone systems have been approved by the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission. The "211" system can be accessed via computer, telephone, or through 5 centers. Seventy percent (70%) of the calls received currently by the 1-800 numbers are not appropriate to the agency called. The "211" system works on a 2 call maximum required to get to the desired agency. The system expects to service 2,000 projected calls for FY05.

Additionally, DOH notes operators on the "211" information and referral system triage calls from the general public and connect the caller to appropriate government and private sector agencies. The "211" information and referral system is intended to reduce the number of calls a state resident needs to make in order to be connected with the appropriate agency or agencies for help. It is also intended to reduce the number of inappropriate calls public and private resources receive each year. A comprehensive "211" system would also be useful to agencies coordinating ancillary supports (state, local and private) for their clients. Passage of this bill would be helpful in drawing down federal matching funds.

KBC/lg