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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR     Martinez          DATE TYPED   02/26/05        HB   826    

SHORT TITLE   Services for Navajo Nation Elderly        SB                     

ANALYST   Weber  

### APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY05	FY06	FY05	FY06		
	\$214.8			Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Department of Indian Affairs (DIA)

Aging and Long Term Care Services Department (ALSTD)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 826 appropriates \$214.8 thousand from the general fund to the Indian Affairs Department for expenditure in fiscal years 2006 through 2008 to contract with a nonprofit to provide elderly intervention specialists who will visit elderly persons in remote areas of the Navajo nation on a bi-weekly basis to assist with health-related issues. No more than \$71.6 thousand may be expended in any one fiscal year.

#### Significant Issues

The Indian Affairs Department contributes.

A 2004 National Indian Council on Aging report stated that there are numerous challenges to providing needed services to vulnerable Indian elders. Service interventions that are needed span a broad spectrum and include support for health and medical care, caregivers, court advocacy, housing, information and referral, counseling, guardianship, assistance in securing protective orders, shelters, and emergency funds. Finally, the re-

port says that services are provided by tribal community health representatives, tribal health, social and behavioral health programs, state agencies and others.

There exists an Office of Indian Aging Affairs under the State Aging and Long Term Care Agency. This office oversees the Indian Area Agency on Aging (IAAA), also known as Planning and Service Areas (PSA). The goal is to empower the IAAA to be the lead advocate on behalf of all Indian elders in the State. Another goal is to address the long term care, housing, transportation and nutrition needs of the elderly in a coordinated system of care. The Office of Indian Aging Affairs contracts with tribal entities for programs and services to Indian elders.

The Navajo Nation Planning and Service Area (PSA 5) serves the elders living in the Navajo Nation tribal areas of New Mexico. A report by the Navajo Area Agency on Aging PSA reports that there are currently 46 senior centers in New Mexico providing congregate and home-delivered meals, transportation and social services. They have also partnered with educational institutions to address nutrition education, physical activity and healthy cooking for Navajo elders at 10 senior centers.

## **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

The appropriation of \$214.8 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY08 shall revert to the general fund.

## **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

Indian Affairs notes.

The State Aging and Long Term Services Department (ALTSD) oversees administrative and fiscal requirements of the Office of Indian Aging Affairs and IAAA contractors. It may be more appropriate for the ALTSD to administer the funds appropriated in HB 826, rather than the DIA, because ALTSD has the technical knowledge and expertise to assure that the funds are utilized to their fullest potential and properly integrated into the other services that are offered to Navajo elders through the IAAA. A stand-alone contract through DIA may not be the best utilization of the funds dedicated to Navajo elders' health-related issues.

**MW/lg**