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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Pinto DATE TYPED 02/09/05 HB _____

SHORT TITLE Navajo Nation Indigent Veterans Housing SB 752

ANALYST Weber

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY05	FY06	FY05	FY06		
	\$1,750.0			Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Indian Affairs (DIA)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 752 appropriates \$1.75 million from the general fund to the Indian Affairs Department to provide housing in New Mexico for indigent veterans on the Navajo Nation.

Significant Issues

The Indian Affairs Department reports that according to the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs (DNVA), with this appropriation, fifty (50) homeless veterans would be provided a housing unit at \$35,000 per unit. According to DNVA, there is currently a need for housing for over 650 Navajo veterans residing in New Mexico. The unemployment rate of Navajo veterans is at least 60% and approximately 10% of Navajo veterans are requesting housing assistance. Many of these veterans are homeless, elderly, handicap/disabled or are otherwise on a fixed income and do not have the means to finance a home.

Out of the current Navajo Nation population of 250,000, there are more than 16,000 Navajo veterans that have served in the U.S. Armed Forces since World War I. Members of the Navajo Nation did not become U.S. citizens until 1924, although many Navajos enlisted to defend our country in major wars even before they became citizens. Since World War II, Navajo veterans

have had and continue to have difficulties in receiving VA benefits and services they are entitled to. Many of these veterans have lost benefits due to isolation, remoteness, and lack of facilities or infrastructure on the Navajo Nation.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$1.75 million 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.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

MW/yr