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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Pinto DATE TYPED 02/09/05 HB _____

SHORT TITLE Navajo Veterans Database Services SB 758

ANALYST Weber

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY05	FY06	FY05	FY06		
	\$101.2			Recurring	General

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Indian Affairs (DIA)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 758 appropriates \$101.2 thousand from the general fund to the Indian Affairs Department to provide statistician and demographer services to establish a database for Navajo veterans.

Significant Issues

The Indian Affairs Department reports The Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs (DNVA), proposes to develop and establish a New Mexico Navajo Veterans Data Base Project to gather needed Navajo veteran statistics. The proposal includes the following budget:

Statistician/Demographer Position	\$ 46,904
Fringe Benefits @30.51%	\$ 14,310
Travel	\$ 10,000
Office Supplies	\$ 5,000
Operating Supplies	\$ 5,000
Equipment	\$ 20,000
Total	\$101,214

The project will include all New Mexico chapters and use up-to-date technology for record collection and storage. Data will include, but not be limited to, information regarding VA benefits, demographic, economic, social, employment education, training, residence, etc. This information will be exchanged with federal and state agencies to assist in acquiring appropriate benefits and services for veterans.

The proposal from DNVS states that the focus of data collection will be at the chapter level. Many Navajo members live, work and go to school throughout the State of New Mexico and elsewhere. The Indian Affairs Department recommends that the study and data collection of Navajo veterans focus on the entire state instead of just within the boundaries of the Navajo Nation. Services and benefits are needed for New Mexico Navajo veterans found in areas outside of the Navajo Nation as well.

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. 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 \$101.2 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.

MW/yr