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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Nava DATE TYPED 02-06-05 HB _____

SHORT TITLE NMSU Research Initiative for Science Program SB 303

ANALYST Woods

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY05	FY06	FY05	FY06		
	\$510.0			Recurring	General

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to the appropriation for New Mexico State University in the General Appropriations Act.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Response Received From

New Mexico State University (NMSU)

No Response Received From

New Mexico Commission on Higher Education (CHE)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 303 – Making an Appropriation for the Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement (RISE) at New Mexico State University – appropriates \$510,000 from the general fund to the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University for expenditure in FY06 for graduate assistantships and undergraduate peer mentors for minority students in biomedical sciences in the Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement (RISE) program. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY06 shall revert to the general fund.

Significant Issues

NMSU indicates that in the year 2000, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) funded a five-year pilot project to support NMSU's Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement (RISE) program which was directed to increasing the numbers of Hispanic, Native-American, and African-American students who earn the PhD and pursue biomedical research careers. By emphasizing biomedical research training and by supporting students all the way to the PhD, RISE fills a unique niche at NMSU. The long-range goal is to enlist previously underutilized talent to fight the war against disease, while increasing ethnic diversity within the biomedical research community.

This bill is intended to offset the conclusion of the pilot project – which has now ended – and to permit the RISE program to continue to offer supplemental instruction in Organic Chemistry for undergraduate students preparing to enter graduate programs in the biomedical sciences, and to fund the award of twenty fellowships to Master's degree students preparing to enter doctoral programs in biomedical research.

This project was not included in CHE's *2005-2006 Higher Education Funding Recommendation*.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

NMSU suggests that this bill will support Supplemental Instruction and will thereby help RISE undergraduates successfully complete Organic Chemistry. As a result, more will be able to meet or exceed NMSU's academic standards, remain at the university, and complete their undergraduate preparation for biomedical graduate programs. Ultimately these students will be much more likely to pursue their professional goals as doctoral-level biomedical scientists. The bill will also facilitate support to master's students doing research, thus improving their success in gaining admittance to PhD programs leading to biomedical research careers.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$510,000 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

NMSU will retain oversight of this program.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

Relates to the appropriation for NMSU in the General Appropriations Act.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

In providing general background information on the RISE program, NMSU indicates that under RISE auspices, 40 volunteer NMSU biomedical research faculty members – representing eight departments in three colleges – accept NMSU undergraduate and graduate students into their laboratories. There the students learn to do biomedical research by actually doing it. They are

paid as laboratory assistants and receive health insurance. Graduate students also receive academic-year tuition, and their research applies toward their MS and PhD thesis requirements. To broaden student research training, some RISE undergraduates travel to other universities during summers to do research with scientists who serve as host mentors. Often these mentors help RISE students get admitted to graduate school and sometimes even become their graduate advisors. Examples of RISE student projects at NMSU include:

- Molecular mechanisms that start and stop cell division (an important part of cancer research).
- Regeneration of injured nerve tissue.
- Prevention and cure of viral diseases.

NMSU notes the following RISE program results since the year 2000:

- 65 RISE undergraduates received BS degrees, with 55 of these entering biomedical graduate programs.
- 28 RISE graduate students received MS degrees.
- 20 RISE graduate students received PhD degrees. These are now biomedical research scientists in universities and laboratories throughout the U.S.

NMSU notes that many of the Hispanic and Native-American baccalaureates who enter U.S. PhD programs hail from NMSU's RISE Program. A primary reason for NMSU's pre-eminence is that many graduates stay on at NMSU to earn the MS before entering PhD programs. This gives them additional research training and experience. They also gain time to get used to graduate school, to gain self-confidence, and to prove they can succeed.

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