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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/8/06

SPONSOR Hamilton LAST UPDATED _____ HB 606

SHORT TITLE WNMU Web-Based Criminal Justice Programs SB _____

ANALYST Earp

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
	\$375.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to House Bill 9

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 606 appropriates \$375,000 from the general fund to the Board of Regents of Western New Mexico University (WNMU) to establish and maintain a web-based criminal justice program.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$375,000 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2007 shall revert to the general fund. These funds would augment a recurring General Appropriation Act appropriation to WNMU for "Instruction and General" purposes, which provides basic support for academic program development and delivery.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

This proposal was not included among the special program funding requests submitted by WNMU to the Higher Education Department (HED) for review. Consequently, this proposal has not been included in the HED fiscal year 2007 funding recommendations to the Legislature.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

WNMU would administer the proposed appropriation. No significant impact is evident.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

This bill is generally related to House Bill 9 which appropriates funding for WNMU's web-based teacher licensure program.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

In addition to the appropriation contained in this bill, additional general fund resources would be generated in future years through the higher education "I&G" funding formula based upon actual student credit hour enrollments in the criminal justice program. No specific estimate of the future formula impact of the program has been provided; however, this impact would be substantial if the program is successful.

HED reports that the WNMU Criminal Justice Program offers students the opportunity to prepare for careers in law enforcement and corrections. The program is also interdisciplinary by studying the procedures and legal issues related to law enforcement and corrections, including sociology, psychology, political science, management, social work and other subjects relevant to an understanding of crime and the criminal justice system. The Criminal Justice programs at WNMU are targeted to two specific markets:

- Fort Bliss personnel, who have historically only been required to have Associates degrees, but are now required to get a bachelors degree.
- Law enforcement personnel who have associates degrees and can also progress to a bachelor's.

The main focus for the WNMU online program will be the Fort Bliss market with an expected cohort of twenty to fifty students annually.

ALTERNATIVES

If line-item funding is approved for this program, it should be provided on a start-up basis and phased-out within two to three years as resources are generated through the I&G formula. Such start-up funding could better be provided through the Program Development Fund established for this purpose pursuant to Section 21-1-27.4 NMSA 1978.

DKE/nt