F I S C A L   I M P A C T   R E P O R T

ORIGINAL DATE 2-2-06

SPONSOR   Fox-Young   LAST UPDATED   HB 822

SHORT TITLE   LOW-COST SPAY & NEUTER SERVICES   SB

ANALYST   Hadwiger

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	**FY07**		
	$1,000.0	Non-Rec	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates SB711; duplicates HB615 except for the amount.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION
LFC Files

Responses Received From
Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 822 appropriates $1 million from the general fund to the Local Government Division (LGD) of the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) for expenditure in FY07 and subsequent years to contract for statewide low-cost or no-cost cat and dog spay and neuter services for low-income caretakers.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of $1 million contained in this bill is a non-recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a fiscal year would not revert.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

DFA explained that the goal of this legislation is to reduce cat and dog overpopulation in New Mexico so that animal shelters and veterinarians will no longer need to euthanize healthy adopt-

able cats and dogs. The New Mexico Pet Overpopulation Project (POP), states that currently in New Mexico, approximately 90,000 healthy and adoptable cats and dogs are euthanized because there are not enough homes for them all. POP is working to provide or facilitate an increase in the number of affordable spay and neuter surgeries for cats and dogs throughout the state through a variety of means, including low cost spay/neuter programs for low income residents and a public awareness campaign. POP is currently in the first phase of its development.

Phase I goals include:
- Help Albuquerque obtain capital outlay funds to construct and equip a high volume spay/neuter clinic and to purchase and equip two spay/neuter vans and two transport vans (HB 2)
- Provide funds for a spay/neuter awareness campaign in the elementary schools of the greater Albuquerque area (should be introduced this legislative session).
- Provide funds for a statewide low or no cost cat and dog spay/neuter program for low-income households (HB615, HB822, and SB711).

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

POP initially wanted DFA to contract with a nonprofit organization that has not been created yet. As DFA cannot do this, the City of Albuquerque will serve as fiscal agent for the appropriation. POP has not created a new nonprofit yet but plan to. This nonprofit will be an umbrella organization serving the smaller local shelters and veterinarians. How the funds get distributed, what constitutes "low-income", what are the program requirements, and how to grow the project to "state-wide" status remain to be answered. From DFA's perspective, the administration of this grant would be easy.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

Duplicates SB711; duplicates HB615 except for the amount of the appropriation ($100 thousand).

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

DFA asked, if the goal is to increase the number of pets who are spayed and neutered, the bill limits the low or no cost services to only low income pet owners. It may be beneficial to offer this incentive more broadly. DFA also noted that the $1 million appropriation will make a larger impact as opposed to HB615's $100.0 appropriation.

DH/nt