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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/6/06

SPONSOR Feldman LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Conference Committees as Public Meetings SB 294

ANALYST Medina

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates House Bill 399

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Attorney General (AGO)

General Services Department (GSD)

Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 294 amends the section of the Open Meetings Act pertaining to meetings of the State Legislature (Section 10-15-2 NMSA 1978) to expand the provisions of the Open Meetings Act to include legislative conference committees, declaring them to be public meetings open to the public at all times. The bill also strikes the provision exempting matters relating to bills, resolutions or other matters not yet presented to either house of the Legislature or general appropriation bill from the Open Meetings Act as it pertains to meetings of the State Legislature.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Conference committees consist of three members each of the Senate and the House appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House to reach a consensus on amendments in dispute when one house refuses to concur with the amendments made to its bill by the other house. According to the Joint Rules of the Legislature, no new items shall be pre-

mented as an amendment for inclusion in conference committee reports unless the item has been the subject of a legislative committee hearing during the session. Furthermore, conference committee reports shall not be subject to amendment in either house.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The Attorney General's Office contends that enacting this bill could affect the workload of the AGO's Civil Division in that it would increase the number of Open Meetings Act inquiries that the office must address.

DUPLICATION

House Bill 399 is a duplicate bill.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

If this bill is not enacted, legislative conference committees and other legislative meetings pertaining to bills, resolutions or other legislative matters not yet presented to either house of the Legislature and general appropriations bills would continue to be exempt from the provisions of the Open Meetings Act.

DXM/nt