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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/30/06

SPONSOR Papen LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Rural Portable Dental Clinic Services SB 425

ANALYST Lewis

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
	\$100.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates HB 447.

Relates to HB 294 (Improve School-Based Oral Health Care).

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Health (DOH)
 Human Services Department (HSD)
 Public Education Department (PED)
 Health Policy Commission (HPC)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 425 appropriates \$100,000 from the general fund to the Department of Health to provide money to contract with a nonprofit school-based portable dental program to provide dental screening examinations and dental sealants to uninsured low-income children not eligible for Medicaid but who are eligible for the free or reduced-price school lunch program in rural school districts.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$100,000 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.

According to the Department of Health (DOH), this appropriation is not part of the executive budget. However, \$1,132,500 is included in the DOH budget request for dental services contracts.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to the Human Services Department (HSD), this appropriation would benefit a population that technically does not exist. All children who are eligible for the free or reduced-price school lunch program are also eligible for Medicaid. However, because many undocumented parents do not enroll their children in Medicaid, those children do not currently receive the benefits that this appropriation seeks to provide.

HSD further notes that low-income children typically receive little if any dental care. As a result, it is likely that a significant number of the screened population will need future dental services. Sealants have been shown to be an effective preventative measure. The use of sealants will reduce future dental decay on chewing surfaces of permanent molar teeth.

According to the Department of Health, the number one leading cause of missed school days for children is pain from tooth decay and dental caries. New Mexico has a shortage of oral health professionals which greatly impacts the oral health status of children. Children who reside in rural parts of the state are at a higher risk for untreated tooth decay due to lack of providers and/or inability to travel to urban areas to receive care due to travel distances.

DOH notes that the Office of Dental Health (ODH) acts as a safety net provider, providing sealants to children in grades 2 & 3 who meet the same criteria, and served 3,447 children in fiscal year 2005. This bill would increase access to dental screening services through contractual arrangements with the ODH.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

DOH notes that this appropriation would support DOH Strategic Plan, Objective 11: Improve access to preventive and restorative oral health services to children.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

According to DOH, funding for this appropriation would be distributed through contractual arrangements utilizing current staffing.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

As noted above, according to HSD, the population this appropriation would benefit technically does not exist.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

HSD further notes that the bill does not require DOH or the contracted nonprofit school-based portable dental program to assist or advise parents or guardians about how to obtain any needed dental services that are identified in the screening process.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

DOH notes that additional funds will not be available for a nonprofit school-based portable dental program to provide dental screening examinations and dental sealants to uninsured low-income children.

AMENDMENTS

To solve the technical eligibility issue noted above, reword to read, "...to uninsured low-income children who are eligible for the free or reduced-price school lunch program in rural school districts, but who do not receive Medicaid benefits."

HSD suggests an amendment on Page 1, Line 23 after "districts" – insert "The nonprofit organization shall provide assistance to the parents or legal guardian of a screened child to help the parent or legal guardian identify locations for free or reduced cost dental services to treat any dental problems identified during the dental screening examination."

ML/mt