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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/01/07

SPONSOR Madalena LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB 214

SHORT TITLE Native American Independent Living Assistance SB \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYST Geisler

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	\$250.0	Recurring	General

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSD)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 214 appropriates \$250,000 to the Aging and Long-Term Services Department to enhance independent living services for Native Americans who are disabled or elderly. The enhancements are to be provided by removing architectural barriers in homes and by purchasing adaptive equipment.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

ALTSD notes that the appropriation contained for this program is not in the executive budget request.

### SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

ALTSD provides that home modifications and assistive technology empower a person with a disability or elder to accomplish daily tasks independently or with less effort. The result is often an increase in self esteem, available energy, and general well-being. This in turn enhances the

individual's ability to benefit from other independent living services and to participate fully in family, community, and work life.

Using the appropriate adaptive equipment, such as a mobility device, can also stabilize or improve the health of a person with a disability, decreasing the need for medical care or helping to avoid nursing home placement.

Discussions at community meetings held by Independent Living Resource in the Pueblos over the last year have revealed that many Native people with disabilities and elders are currently living in houses that are not accessible and that there is an overwhelming need for home modifications in existing homes. Architectural barriers limit the ability of individuals to do basic tasks at home and to get out and be involved in activities away from the house. Examples of needed modifications include entrance ramps, wider doorways, grab bars, modifications to the bathroom and clearance under the sink. Information about assistive technology is not readily available to the community at large and many Native people with disabilities and elders struggle to live independently without the benefit of assistive and adaptive equipment that could improve their quality of life.

Home modifications that might be funded include such items as: interior and exterior ramps, landing platforms at top and bottom of ramps, widening doors, grab bars for bathrooms, tub and shower modifications, accessible toilets, lever door handles and accessible cabinets.

Assistive devices that might be funded include such items as: screen readers for computers, automatic door openers, lifts/ramps for vans, hand controls for driving, wheelchair carriers for autos, shower benches, ceiling track lights, voice-activated computer software and home environmental controls

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

ALTSD notes that they could operate the program in a fashion similar to the GAP program. Under that program, ALTSD issues vouchers for home modifications to individuals on the D&E registry. The department would consider partnering, through a contractual arrangement, with independent living resource centers to implement this initiative. The implementation of this program can be accomplished with a minimal administrative impact on the Department.

**GG/sb**