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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 01/29/07

SPONSOR Lopez LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE NMSU Strengthening Families Initiative SB 396

ANALYST Hanika Ortiz

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	\$500.0	recurring	general fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates HB 448

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

Public Education Department (PED)

Children, Youth & Families Department (CYFD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 396 appropriates \$500 thousand from the general fund to New Mexico State University (NMSU) to support the Strengthening Families Initiative (SFI) to reduce child abuse and neglect and prevent youth problem behavior.

SB 396 relates to the Governor's Healthy New Mexico goal of providing enhanced services to high-risk and high-need individuals, and to the Governor's Safer New Mexico initiative task to reduce child abuse and neglect.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$500 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY08 shall revert to the general fund.

This appropriation was submitted by New Mexico State University to HED for review and is not

included in the Department's funding recommendation for FY08. The Department is recommending the recurring amount of \$47.5 thousand, but not NMSU's request for the additional \$500 thousand.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

HED reports that in 1999, the Children's Defense Fund rated New Mexico among the worst places to raise a child. They stated the states high rate of children living in poverty, single parent families, school failure and dropout, teen pregnancy, and adolescent substance abuse as reasons for the rating. The SFI was established to address some of these challenges.

The purpose of the initiative is to reduce child abuse and neglect and prevent youth behavior problems. The target audience includes teen parents, unmarried parents, and grandparents raising grandchildren, families affected by domestic violence, families dealing with substance abuse, and families involved with the criminal justice system. Parents and children attend weekly classes for 15-24 weeks and receive instruction in healthy family relationships, life skills and nutrition. Since February 2003, the SFI has delivered 127 family strengthening classes in 20 counties throughout the state. At least 360 families are to be served this year and approximately 14,000 hours of education will be delivered.

Currently, SFI provides parenting education to low-income families who either receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or are eligible for TANF. This appropriation would be used to serve families who do not meet the income guidelines required by Human Services Department funding, and to reach more families in more counties, particularly rural and underserved populations.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

NMSU will be responsible for administering the funding appropriation in the bill.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

State agencies question how NMSU's efforts might be coordinated with other existing programs that reduce child abuse and neglect and prevent youth problem behavior.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

Duplicates HB 448

ALTERNATIVES

NMSU to seek funding elsewhere, such as from private or federal funding sources.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Funding to support the SFI and reach more families at NMSU to reduce child abuse and neglect and prevent youth problem behavior may not be provided.

AHO/nt