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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2-14-2007

SPONSOR Ortiz y Pino LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB \_\_\_\_\_

SHORT TITLE Outreach for Veterans Exposed to Uranium SB 840

ANALYST Dearing

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	\$25.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to House Bill 736, Senate Bill 841

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Department of Health (DOH)

Veterans' Services Department (VSD)

Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 840 appropriates \$25 thousand from the general fund for expenditure in FY08 to the Veterans' Services department to develop and provide health-related information for military veterans who may have been exposed to depleted uranium, or other radioactive isotopes in multiple military campaigns including the Persian region, Iraq, or Afghanistan.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$25 thousand contained in Senate Bill 840 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.

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

Concerns have been raised that American military personnel have been exposed to depleted uranium from military weapons during the Middle East conflicts in the past two decades. These exposures may have some long-term health effects.

Depleted uranium is widely used in the manufacture of heavy munitions and armor in many of the U.S. military and other western military's weapons systems. The material is 1.7 times denser than lead, and provides an advantage when competing against more traditional materials. Dusts and particulates from these munitions exist in the air and on the ground in battlefield conditions.

Exposure to aerosolized depleted uranium particulates has been thought to cause acute irreversible damage to kidney function and other organ damage when very high exposure levels occur.<sup>1</sup> There is usually an extended time period between an exposure to radioactive materials and the growth of related cancers, such as leukemia and other types.<sup>2</sup>

According to the Department of Health, there is health information on uranium exposure available on multiple websites including the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. However, developing targeted educational outreach, in language understandable by the lay person, would address specific concerns of veterans exposed to depleted uranium.

## **RELATIONSHIP**

Senate Bill 840 relates to House Bill 736. House Bill 736 provides uranium training to veterans. Senate Bill 840 complements Senate Bill 841, which appropriates \$200 thousand and seeks to establish a testing protocol, develop and establish a health registry, and contract with appropriate testing laboratories and coordinate affected parties in regard to voluntary testing program for military veterans who may have been exposed to depleted uranium.

## **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

There is a substantial amount of available information regarding this issue in existence. The bill does not clarify whether the Veterans' Services department would be responsible for producing information/ research on the depleted uranium, or whether they would be compiling existing research to distribute to affected veterans.

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<sup>1</sup>Journal of Environmental Radioactivity, *Properties, use and health effects of depleted uranium (DU): a general overview*, 2-5-2002

<sup>2</sup>Journal of Environmental Radioactivity, *Properties, use and health effects of depleted uranium (DU): a general overview*, 2-5-2002