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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/23/08

SPONSOR Hamilton LAST UPDATED _____ HB 194

SHORT TITLE WNMU Internet-Based Criminal Justice Program SB _____

ANALYST Haug

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$175.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 194 appropriates \$175.0 from the general fund to the Board of Regents of Western New Mexico University to maintain and expand an internet-based criminal justice program.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$175.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2009 shall revert to the general fund.

The HED states that this request was submitted by WNMU to the New Mexico Higher Education Department for review, however was not included in the Executive's funding recommendation for FY09.

The HED's evaluation table of FY09 Research and Public Service Projects provided to the LFC classifies this project as a "breach" of the Higher Education Formula. Reasons for this classification decision are not provided. (LFC Report 07-20, Higher Education Department Review of Selected Research and Public Service Projects, January 12, 2008, Table 4, p76.)

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The HED states that the Western New Mexico University online and distance delivery Criminal Justice program is designed to deliver education, training and professionalism to law enforcement anywhere in New Mexico. Professional, well-trained law enforcement has never been more important at the state's border region:

- Economic growth requires safety and security of property, infrastructure, and investment.
- Growing law enforcement presence and activity in Southern New Mexico will increase citizen contact with law enforcement, requiring increased professionalism in and from law enforcement personnel.
- Residents of New Mexico living adjacent to an international border need maximum professionalism from law enforcement

Many New Mexican law enforcement officers serve and/or live in remote areas of the state making access to traditional classroom education impossible.

According to the HED, this program is designed to develop online and distance delivery training and education to enable law enforcement personnel to obtain training or a university degree anywhere in New Mexico. Increased capacity to produce quality law enforcement officers through technology will in turn impact the safety and quality of life in rural, urban, and suburban communities in New Mexico.

GH/mt