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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 01/24/08
 LAST UPDATED 01/29/08 HB 231/aHHGAC

SPONSOR Tripp

SHORT TITLE Rural Socorro County Prenatal Health Care SB _____

ANALYST Geisler

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

| Appropriation | | Recurring or Non-Rec | Fund Affected |
|---------------|---------|----------------------|---------------|
| FY08 | FY09 | | |
| | \$100.0 | Recurring | General |

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

SUMMARY

Synopsis of HHGAC Amendment

The House Health and Government Affairs committee amendment to House Bill 231 clarifies that the funding contained in HB 231 can be used for care after birth by striking “prenatal” and replacing it with “perinatal.” Perinatal is commonly defined as “of, relating to, or being the period around childbirth, especially the five months before and one month after birth.”

Synopsis of Original Bill

House Bill 231 appropriates \$100,000 from the general fund to the Department of Health (DOH) to contract with a general hospital in Socorro County for prenatal health care in the rural areas of Socorro County. Any unexpended balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2009 would revert to the general fund.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

DOH notes that the funding in HB 231 is not part of the Governor’s executive budget request.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Socorro is considered a "Frontier" county. It has a population density of 2.7 persons per square mile. In 2006, there were 275 live births to residents of Socorro County, with 11.27% of these births to mothers who received low or no prenatal care. Socorro ranked 16th out of New

Mexico's 33 counties for the percent of live births to women receiving low or no prenatal care. In 2005, in Socorro, 19.9% of births were to teens ages 15-19. In 2004, 19.9% of live births to Socorro residents were premature—defined as earlier than 37 weeks of gestation—compared to 18.1% in New Mexico (Vital Records and Statistics Annual Reports). For 2007, the entirety of Socorro County has been designated a Health Professional Shortage Area (NM Health Policy Commission, Quick Facts 2008).

The New Mexico Department of Health (DOH) funds a community health council for Socorro County under the Maternal and Child Health Plan Act. The fiscal agent for the council is Socorro Mental Health, Inc. Members of the health council, in cooperation with Socorro County Options, Prevention and Education (SCOPE), assess health needs of the county and have developed strategies for community action for addressing these needs. As a subcommittee of SCOPE, the Socorro General Hospital Maternal and Child Health Program receives funds (\$45,738 in FY08) to cover the costs of perinatal and family health services made available for residents ineligible for such services through Medicaid.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

DOH notes that in 2004, Socorro County's residents' average per capita income was \$20,450 vs. \$26,679 for the State (Vital Records and Statistics Annual Reports). From 1998 through 2005, prenatal care services were provided to 68.8% of Socorro County residents under Medicaid, 18.25% under private insurance, and 12.4% was self-pay by the uninsured and/or written off at a loss by providers (Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System/PRAMS data).

GG/bb