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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR	Anderson	ORIGINAL DATE	02/01/08	HM	18
		LAST UPDATED		SB	
SHORT TITLE	VLA, In Recognition				
		ANALYST	Padilla		

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Memorial 18 recognizes the National Radio Astronomy Observatory's very large array radio telescope for its prominence in the field of astronomy and for its contributions toward the advancement of scientific knowledge. Copies of this Memorial are to be transmitted to the Directors of the National Science Foundation and the National Radio Astronomy Observatory.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

HM 18 states that:

- The very large array radio telescope, situated outside of Socorro, New Mexico, is one of the world's premier astronomical radio observatories.
- The very large array radio telescope is an exceedingly powerful scientific instrument, which has transformed many areas of astronomy in its years of operation.
- The array operations center is located on the campus of the New Mexico Institute of mining and technology, which also provides scientific, engineering, technical computer and support staff for the very large array radio telescope as well as the very long baseline array radio telescope.
- The telescope has a long history in New Mexico, having been approved by congress in 1972, constructed between 1973 and 1980 and dedicated in 1980.
- The large array radio telescope in New Mexico is still the most productive astronomical instrument on earth.
- The data collected from the 27 antennas of the telescope are combined electronically to give the resolution of an antenna twenty-two miles across, with the sensitivity of a dish four hundred twenty-two feet in diameter.
- The telescope is used by astronomers from around the world to conduct fundamental research on the nature of the universe and to seek answers to some of the biggest questions, such as how the universe began, how big is it how old is it and how will it end.
- The telescope is used for atmospheric and weather studies, satellite tracking and other miscellaneous scientific procedures.

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- The very large array radio telescope is of economic benefit to New Mexico, in that it employs up to a hundred people on any given day, who work to keep the telescope in good working condition.
- The popular award-winning movie “Contact” was filmed in part at the very large array radio telescope, which increased tourism to the area and has further supported the local economy.
- The National Radio Astronomy Observatory operating the very large array radio telescope is a facility of the National Science Foundation, which is operated under cooperative agreement by Associated Universities, Inc.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

The consequences of not enacting this bill result in lack recognition by the State of New Mexico for the National Radio Observatory’s very large array radio telescope and for its prominence in the field of astronomy and for its contributions toward the advancement of scientific knowledge.

JRP/bb