

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current FIRs (in HTML & Adobe PDF formats) are available on the NM Legislative Website (legis.state.nm.us). Adobe PDF versions include all attachments, whereas HTML versions may not. Previously issued FIRs and attachments may be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 01/25/08

SPONSOR Ingle LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB \_\_\_\_\_

SHORT TITLE Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Campaign SB 251

ANALYST Geisler

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$200.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSD)  
 Health Policy Commission (HPC)  
 Developmental Disabilities Planning Council

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 251 appropriates \$200.0 from the general fund to the Aging and Long-Term Services Department for expenditure in fiscal year 2009 to increase public awareness of traumatic brain injury through a multi-media campaign. The multi-media campaign will target active military and veteran communities and their families and is designed to identify persons with traumatic brain injury. The campaign will involve the collaboration of ALTSD with the veteran's services department and the New Mexico brain injury advisory council. Any unexpended balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2009 shall revert to the General Fund.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The funding proposed by this legislation was not included in the ALTSD FY09 budget request.

### SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

DDPC notes that until there are comprehensive pre and post deployment screening for ALL troops returning from a war zone there will be citizens living in our communities with

undiagnosed brain injuries. An article published in the New England Journal of Medicine (August 2003) states: “Timing is important. Neurologists now know that the brain possesses a certain flexibility, and can repair and retrain itself within a certain window of time, usually up to 24 months following the injury.” Early detection, diagnosis and treatment of brain injuries will increase the likelihood of a more positive outcome for the individual. Mild brain injuries from blasts aren’t easily detected and symptoms can mirror those of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. PTSD is a psychological reaction to trauma and TBI is a physical injury. The symptoms are the same, but treatment is different. The public needs to be able to identify the symptoms, be given information on how to seek a diagnosis and where to find appropriate treatment.

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is the signature injury of the Iraq war and Afghanistan. Recent data obtained by ABC News indicates that 10 percent or more of the Marines and soldiers who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan have sustained a possible brain injury. This could mean more than 150,000 Americans who have served or are now serving could have a TBI that is unrecognized by the Department of Defense. (BIA of America)

Blast injuries are injuries that result from the complex pressure wave generated by an explosion. In a blast, brain injuries can also occur by other means such as impact from blast-energized debris, the individual being physically thrown, burns and/or inhalation of gases and vapors. The pressure waves travel hundreds of yards at a rate of 1,600 feet per second (Glasser, 2006) which can injure those troops not necessarily next to an explosion. A blast injury can result in a closed head injury that isn’t obvious, no apparent bleeding, no loss of limbs, no visible sign of injury.

59% of those exposed to a blast and seen at Walter Reed Army Medical Center between Jan 03 and Feb 05 sustained a TBI according to the New England Journal of Medicine.

Depending on the extent of the neurological damage, symptoms at the time of impact and later on can include everything for headaches, nausea and memory difficulties to mood changes, cognitive problems and loss of consciousness, according to the CDC. Without the visibility of an injury, many mild and moderate brain injuries go undetected. The individual knows that they are experiencing symptoms, but many don’t know why and what the cause is.

Increasing public awareness at the community level for those that may have returned with an undiagnosed brain injury would help the individual and their family and friends identify the symptoms, and provide resources of where to go for diagnosis and treatment.

GG/mt