

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 1/24/08

SPONSOR Campos LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Study Use of Corps Members for Nursing SB 356

ANALYST Peery-Galon

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$50.0	Non-Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Veterans' Services Department (VSD)
Department of Health (DOH)

No Responses Received From

Board of Nursing
Department of Military Affairs (DMA)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 356 appropriates \$50.0 from the general fund to the Department of Military Affairs to convene a group to study the potential benefits of using New Mexico's military hospital corps members and medics to alleviate the state's nursing shortage and to conduct an in-depth comparison of military and civilian curricula, training and job descriptions for nursing services and devise a curriculum for nursing licensure that allows military hospital corps members and medics to earn a licensed practical nurse diploma and sit for a civilian licensure examination.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$50.0 contained in this bill is a nonrecurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2009 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

VSD states New Mexico is currently facing nursing shortage, and that the men and women that are part of the medical corpsmen and medics already have the training necessary to step right in as civilian nurses. The study would ask that a comparison of the training and curricula of the military medic program and the civilian nursing program. VSD notes the military currently has very strict training for medical corpsmen and medics.

DOH states that military corpsmen and medics receive extensive training in the military which qualifies them to care for servicemen and their families throughout the world. The training is not accredited through state boards of nursing as it misses key and essential elements required for graduation from a credentialed nursing program. DOH states individuals must have a certificate or diploma from a credentialed school or have their transcript reviewed by the Board of Nursing and be determined to be eligible before taking the New Mexico licensure exam.

DOH states under these provisions, military members who have not graduated from an accredited Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) training program may ask the New Mexico Board of Nursing to review their training and advise them of the missing training elements. New Mexico schools of practical nursing will allow these individuals to take the missing courses, which usually are obstetrics, gynecology and psychiatric nursing. DOH states after completion of the missing elements, the individual can take the licensure exam. If the individual's record indicates he or she has received appropriate training in all the required elements then the individual would be allowed to take the exam without additional training.

DOH notes that military corpsmen represent a potential source of supply of LPNs which can help respond to New Mexico's need for nurses. The proposed legislation would help facilitate the transition of military personnel to LPN work.

DOH reports, as of 2006, there were 15,168 Registered Nurses (RN) and 2,916 LPNs with New Mexico residency. The New Mexico nursing workforce has increased by 3 percent from 2006. However, over 46 percent of RNs and LPNs are over age 50. Center data also shows that it was predicted in 2000 that "40 percent of the national nurse workforce would be over age 50 by 2010." DOH states additional nurses will be needed for the increased demand of a growing population and a higher percentage of elderly. DOH states the New Mexico Department of Labor predicts "the state will need an additional 4,520 RNs and 680 LPNs by 2012."

TECHNICAL ISSUES

VSD questions whether the findings of this study group would go back to the Department of Health, and how soon the corpsmen would be able to sit for the nursing exam. VSD also questions if regular Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine medics would be part of the program since they also have the same training as the National Guard medics and corpsmen.

RPG/nt