

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill No:** HB 440

**49th Legislature, 1st Session, 2009**

**Short Title:** Native American School Visits to Legislature

**Sponsor(s):** Representative Sandra D. Jeff and Others

**Analyst:** James Ball

**Date:** February 12, 2009

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**Bill Summary:**

HB 440 makes an appropriation to enable Native American high school students to visit the New Mexico Legislature.

**Fiscal Impact:**

\$50,000 is appropriated to the Indian Affairs Department (IAD) from the General Fund for FY 10.

Unexpended or unencumbered funds revert to the General Fund.

**Fiscal Issues:**

The Legislative Finance Committee Fiscal Impact Report for HB 440 notes that, according to the December 2008 revenue estimate, FY 10 recurring revenues will support only a base expenditure level that is \$293.0 million, or 2.6 percent, less than FY 09 appropriations. All appropriations outside of the *General Appropriation Act* will be viewed in this declining revenue context.

**Issues:**

According to IAD, funding provided in HB 440 could be used for travel, lodging, and per diem for Native American students to visit the Legislature. The program could afford an experiential learning opportunity for the students that could reinforce connections to the high school curriculum, expose the students to state governmental history, provide Native American legislative role models, help the students better understand the structure of state government, and learn how they can impact the legislative process.

Both the IAD and the Public Education Department analyses indicate that HB 440 provides no criteria for these visits. For example:

- target high schools (public, charter, or BIE);
- regional location of the high school (northwest, urban, or rural);
- number of students targeted;
- tribal affiliation (Navajo, Pueblo, Apache); or
- target grade levels.

**Background:**

IDA states that studies have shown that students with the beliefs in themselves and in their ability to accomplish their own goals are often more likely to develop interest in professional careers and higher education. HB 440 would serve to strengthen Native American students' belief in themselves and in their ability to play a role in government and policymaking.

**Related Bills:**

HB 177 *School Educational Field Trips*

HB 435 *Attendance at State Fair as Instruction Day*