

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: SB 512

50th Legislature, 1st Session, 2011

Tracking Number: .185436.1

Short Title: Tohatchi Youth Activity Service Appropriation

Sponsor(s): Senator John Pinto

Analyst: James Ball

Date: March 11, 2011

Bill Summary:

SB 512 makes an appropriation to the Indian Affairs Department (IAD) to provide after-school and weekend activity programs for youth in Tohatchi in McKinley County.

Fiscal Impact:

\$250,000 is appropriated from the General Fund for expenditure in FY 12. Unexpended or unencumbered funds remaining at the end of FY 12 revert to the General Fund.

Fiscal Issues:

The Fiscal Impact Report (FIR) by the Legislative Finance Committee notes that the appropriation contained in SB 512 is a recurring expense to the General Fund. The FY 12 budget recommendation for IAD includes funding for similar programs in McKinley County, although at reduced levels from FY 11.

Substantive Issues:

According to the FIR, there are multiple youth development programs in and near Tohatchi that support Navajo youth in the area. These programs include Tohatchi Chapter of the Office of Youth Development, the Boys and Girls Club of the Diné Nation, and the National Indian Youth Leadership Project (NIYLP).

The FIR notes that the NIYLP is a nonprofit organization that has been recognized by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention at the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices as the first Native American best-practice model program. These programs are already working within the chapter to inspire and enable all youth, particularly those from disadvantaged circumstances, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens.

Background:

The analysis of SB 512 by the Public Education Department (PED) provides the following information and data:

- According to the Navajo Nation 2000 Census, Tohatchi has a population of approximately 1,988, with approximately half of the population between the ages of one and 19.
- Native American youth face many challenges and require programs and mentors that can support them to stay in school and plan their future.
- Native American youth can benefit from early intervention, mentoring, leadership skills, and self-esteem-building programs.
- Navajo youth in Tohatchi are challenged by problems including gang violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and violent incidents and crimes.
- The Navajo Youth Risk Behavior Survey from 2005 shows the following percentages of drug and alcohol use and violence among the 10,416 students in 92 middle schools and 13,421 students in 46 high schools:

	<u>Mid school</u>	<u>High school</u>
<u>Drug</u>		
Marijuana	26 percent	34 percent
Cocaine	8 percent	18 percent
Sniffing substances	12 percent	13 percent
<u>Alcohol</u>	31 percent	36 percent
<u>Violence</u>		
Carried a weapon	32 percent	23 percent
Physical fight	46 percent	40 percent

PED also notes that SB 512 affects the *New Mexico Indian Education Act* by ensuring equitable and culturally relevant learning environments and providing for the implementation of educational systems that positively affect the educational success of Native American students.

Related Bills:

None as of March 11, 2011.