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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Rodriguez **ORIGINAL DATE** 02/23/11
LAST UPDATED _____ **HB** _____
SHORT TITLE Appropriation for Services for Deaf and Blind **SB** 485
ANALYST Earnest

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY11	FY12		
	\$300.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to an appropriation in the General Appropriation Act for the Governor's Commission on Disability.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Governor's Commission on Disability

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 485 appropriates \$300 thousand from the general fund to Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons to provide support services for a program in Albuquerque that provides services for the deaf and the deaf and blind.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$300 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2012 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

In FY10, \$250 thousand was appropriated from the general fund to the Governor's Commission on Disability for a support service providers (SSP) program for deaf and deaf-blind individuals. Due to budget reductions, the amount was reduced in FY10 and FY11. The Governor's

Commission on Disability (GCD) contracted with the non-profit Community Outreach Program for the Deaf, and other organizations for SSP programs.

According to GCD, the deaf and deaf/blind population is one of the most isolated groups in New Mexico and has been un-served or underserved for years. The FY10 appropriation was the first to provide for direct services for the deaf and deaf/blind population. GCD assisted in the development and implementation of an SSP program. The program serves about 30 individuals in Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Roswell. There is program outreach statewide to identify deaf/blind individuals who can benefit from this program. A training program for SSPs has been developed and trainings have been presented.

The Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons is charged with overseeing the New Mexico telecommunications relay network. The commission operates a single program providing advocacy, outreach, referral and educational services and oversight of the telecommunications relay network for deaf and hard-of-hearing persons. The commission receives funding from a 0.33 percent surcharge on gross telephone charges, and this appropriation would be the only general fund revenue in the budget.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

The House Appropriation and Finance Committee (HAFC) substitute for House Bills, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 -- the General Appropriation Act – includes some funding for continuation of this project at the Governor's Commission on Disability. This appropriation would either add to or duplicate that funding.

BE/mew