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F I S C A L I M P A C T R E P O R T

SPONSOR Lechuga-Tena ORIGINAL DATE 2/2/2016 LAST UPDATED _____ HB 286
SHORT TITLE Police and Firefighters for Community Safety SB _____
ANALYST Rogers

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY16	FY17		
\$0.0	\$10,000.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Public Safety (DPS)

Responses Not Received From

Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 286 makes an appropriation to DPS for expenditure in FY17 of \$5 million to recruit, train, and educate additional law enforcement officers for community policing programs. The bill also makes a \$5 million appropriation to the local government division of DFA to recruit, train, and educate additional firefighters for community safety programs.

Both appropriations within the bill that are unexpended or unencumbered at the end for FY17 revert to the general fund.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

DPS expressed concerns that they will have to contract for all the training and educational initiatives and not be able to recruit new officers, as the funding is only provided for FY17 and not recurring. The appropriation does not provide for a base increase to the existing budget to pay for the individuals recruited and hired and the associated equipment provided to those new officers.

The LFC presumes that the sentiments from DPS would also be true for firefighters at the county and municipal levels of government. Without continuing funding, the departments will not be able to sustain any additional recruitment after FY17.

If the appropriations contained in the bill were recurring, the impact to the general fund would be \$10 million per year.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Bureau of Justice Assistance of the U.S. Department of Justice describes community policing as “a collaboration between the police and the community that identifies and solves community problems. With the police no longer the sole guardians of law and order, all members of the community become active allies in the effort to enhance the safety and quality of neighborhoods. Community policing has far-reaching implications. The expanded outlook on crime control and prevention, the new emphasis on making community members active participants in the process of problem solving, and the patrol officers’ pivotal role in community policing require profound changes within the police organization. The neighborhood patrol officer, backed by the police organization, helps community members mobilize support and resources to solve problems and enhance their quality of life. Community members voice their concerns, contribute advice, and take action to address these concerns. Creating a constructive partnership will require the energy, creativity, understanding, and patience of all involved.”

DPS, according to their mission statement, works to develop, evaluate, and adapt their efforts to become a national model in providing ethical, innovative, effective, efficient and customer-oriented public safety services to the citizens and visitors of New Mexico. Although it is not clear if DPS is structured to allow participation in community policing, the department is well positioned to collaborate with local police jurisdictions to improve public safety.

TMR/jo