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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/20/19
 LAST UPDATED 2/21/19

SPONSOR SRC _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Create Office of Peacebuilding SB 276/SRCS

ANALYST Rabin

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY20	FY21		
\$500.0		Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)

Department of Health (DOH)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

The Senate Rules Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 276 appropriates \$500 thousand from the general fund to the newly created Office of Peacebuilding to carry out its duties. The bill creates the Office of Peacebuilding, administratively attached to DFA, and an 11-member Citizens Peacebuilding Advisory Council. The office would analyze and promote policies and programs that encourage a culture of peace and nonviolence; develop a peace education curriculum to be integrated into teacher training, schools, and restorative justice programs; and provide grants for peace education, nonviolent conflict resolution, and other peacebuilding initiatives.

The advisory council is charged with assisting and making recommendations to the director and the governor regarding peacebuilding policies and practices, assessing peace-related activities and reporting to the director and the governor on their effects on governmental entities and communities, and soliciting public input on these matters. The council is composed of numerous stakeholders, including peace advocacy organizations, health professionals, public safety professionals, educators, faith leaders, and veterans.

This bill has a delayed effective date of July 1, 2019.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$500 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert. This analysis reflects the appropriation as recurring because additional funding would be needed to operate the office going forward. Generally, if an appropriation creates the expectation the program will be continued in the future, it is considered recurring.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

This bill would create two new state government entities, the office and the commission.

DOH notes SB276 does not specify the goals of the Office of Peacebuilding; however, it states that activities of the office might positively impact high rates of violence in New Mexico as well as New Mexico residents who are at elevated risk for perpetration of violence and victimization by violence. The agency provided the following information on violence in New Mexico:

Violent crime (including murder, non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) has been increasing in New Mexico while neighboring states have significantly lower rates; indeed, Nevada is the only state with a higher violent crime rate in the region.¹ In 2016, NM had the third highest violent death rate in the nation,² and homicide was the third leading cause of death among persons 15-34 years in 2015-2017.³

Bullying, another form of violence, often results in physical injury, social and emotional distress, and even death. 18.7 percent of high school students in New Mexico reported they were bullied on school property and 14 percent were bullied electronically.⁴ Studies have linked bullying to suicidal ideation,⁵ while showing a strong relationship between frequency of bullying episodes and risk of suicidal ideation and suicide attempts.⁶ In addition, the 2017 YRRS showed 24.2 percent of New Mexico high school students reported carrying a weapon in the past month, a rate higher than the national rate of 15.7 percent.

Certain New Mexico populations experience more violence than others. For example, women experience more sexual violence than men. Sex differences and racial/ethnic differences in homicide and suicide rates exist. From 2015-2017, the male victim homicide rate was over three times higher than the female rate. Among males, Black and American Indian individuals had the highest homicide victim rates, followed by Hispanic males; White and American Indian males had the highest suicide rates. Overall, male suicide rates in New Mexico were more than 3-4 times higher than female suicide rates.⁷

¹ <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2015/crime-in-the-u.s.-2015/tables/table-5>

² The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. WISQARS, 2016: <http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/index.html>

³ NMDOH Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics, Accessed Jan. 30, 2019, from DOH Indicator-Based Information System.

⁴ 2017 NM Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey, DOH, Accessed January 30, 2019 from <http://www.youthrisk.org/tables/#/2017>

⁵ van der Wal, M. F., de Wit, C. A. M., & Hirasing, R.A. (2003). Psychosocial health among young victims and offenders of direct and indirect bullying. *Pediatrics*, 111, 1312–1317.

⁶ Klomek, Marrocco, Kleinman, Schonfeld, & Gould, 2007, https://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1304&context=cc_pubs.

⁷ Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics, DOH. Accessed January 30, 2019 from DOH IBIS.

There are also gender and racial/ethnic differences among high school students and their experiences of violence.⁸ Boys are more likely than girls to carry a weapon onto school property (8.0 percent vs. 3.4 percent) but girls are more likely than boys to attempt suicide (11.9 percent vs. 7.7 percent). White high school students (7.9 percent) had a lower rate of suicide attempts than their American Indian (12.7 percent) or African American (18.4 percent) counterparts. American Indian students (14.1 percent) and Hispanic students (16.3 percent) were less likely to report being bullied on school property than White students (24.5 percent).

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

This bill requires the office to be responsible for its space and for the space and administrative needs of the council, and council members receive per diem and mileage. This bill authorizes, but does not require, the director of the office to hire assistants and a general counsel and to enter into contracts and make grants. DFA notes it is unclear if the grants are intended to be funded through the \$500 thousand appropriation or if the office is to seek out other sources of funding to then award to sub-grantees.

An annual budget of \$500 thousand may be sufficient for these purposes, but DFA states this may need to be adjusted in either direction once the agency is able to analyze and evaluate the office's annual appropriation request in conjunction with historical expenditure and performance data.

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⁸ New Mexico YRRS, DOH and PED, 2017.