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HOUSE BILL 42

**56TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2023**

INTRODUCED BY

Elizabeth "Liz" Thomson and Kristina Orteza and  
Reena Szczepanski

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC HEALTH; CREATING THE STATEWIDE PUBLIC HEALTH  
AND CLIMATE PROGRAM; CREATING THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND CLIMATE  
RESILIENCY FUND; MAKING APPROPRIATIONS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. A new section of the Public Health Act is  
enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] STATEWIDE PUBLIC HEALTH AND CLIMATE  
PROGRAM.--

A. By January 1, 2024, the environmental health  
epidemiology bureau of the epidemiology and response division  
of the department shall establish a statewide public health and  
climate program.

B. In implementing the statewide public health and  
climate program, the environmental health epidemiology bureau

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1 shall:

2 (1) administer the public health and climate  
3 resiliency fund to assist local communities in preparing for  
4 and responding to public health emergencies related to climate  
5 change and extreme weather;

6 (2) help improve interagency collaboration  
7 focused on health equity, reducing health impacts of extreme  
8 weather and climate adaptation in New Mexico;

9 (3) assist in the formulation of concrete,  
10 coordinated and cohesive action plans supporting local  
11 communities in building health resiliency to future climate  
12 impacts;

13 (4) provide climate and public health  
14 expertise to assist local community planning in:

15 (a) making health-informed decisions  
16 about current and future climate impacts;

17 (b) integrating the latest climate and  
18 public health science into emergency preparedness programs; and

19 (c) accessing federal and other funds  
20 for climate adaptation; and

21 (5) facilitate meaningful community engagement  
22 within communities most harmed, or determined by climate  
23 science as most likely to be harmed, by extreme weather  
24 events."

25 SECTION 2. A new section of the Public Health Act is

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1 enacted to read:

2 "[NEW MATERIAL] PUBLIC HEALTH AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY FUND  
3 CREATED.--

4 A. The "public health and climate resiliency fund"  
5 is created as a reverting fund in the state treasury. The fund  
6 consists of appropriations, gifts, grants, donations, income  
7 from investment of the fund and any other money distributed or  
8 otherwise allocated to the fund. The department shall  
9 administer the fund. Money in the fund is appropriated to the  
10 department for the purposes set forth in Subsection B of this  
11 section. Disbursements from the fund shall be made by warrant  
12 of the secretary of finance and administration pursuant to  
13 vouchers signed by the secretary of health or the secretary's  
14 authorized representative.

15 B. Money in the public health and climate  
16 resiliency fund may be used by the department to make grants of  
17 up to two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) to a  
18 political subdivision of the state or an Indian nation, tribe  
19 or pueblo for the purposes of preparing for and responding to  
20 public health emergencies related to extreme weather and other  
21 climate impacts.

22 C. The secretary shall prioritize grant  
23 applications that:

24 (1) emphasize planning, projects and  
25 activities to benefit people in low-income and disadvantaged

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1 communities;

2 (2) provide for integration of public health  
3 concerns and recommendations with other local emergency and  
4 climate adaptation plans, projects and activities;

5 (3) emphasize planning, projects and  
6 activities that are also eligible for grant funds from federal  
7 programs or help New Mexico become eligible for federal funds;  
8 and

9 (4) involve local health councils as direct  
10 participants in the planning process.

11 D. Not less than fifty percent of the total grant  
12 funds approved by the secretary shall be awarded to political  
13 subdivisions with total human populations equal to or less than  
14 one hundred thousand.

15 E. There shall be no requirement for matching funds  
16 for eligibility for grant applications pursuant to this  
17 section."

18 SECTION 3. APPROPRIATIONS.--

19 A. One million one hundred thousand dollars  
20 (\$1,100,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the  
21 department of health for expenditure in fiscal year 2024 to  
22 support the statewide public health and climate program within  
23 the environmental health epidemiology bureau of the  
24 epidemiology and response division of the department of health.  
25 Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of

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1 fiscal year 2024 shall revert to the general fund.

2 B. Five million dollars (\$5,000,000) is  
3 appropriated from the general fund to the department of health  
4 for expenditure in fiscal years 2024 through 2028 for the  
5 public health and climate resiliency fund. Any unexpended or  
6 unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2028  
7 shall revert to the general fund.