FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Rodriguez	**LAST UPDATED**
	ORIGINAL DATE 2/11/2023
SHORT TITLE CYFD Domestic Violence Victims & Animals	**BILL NUMBER** Senate Bill 291
	ANALYST Chenier

APPROPRIATION*
(dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY23	**FY24**		
	$350.0	Recurring	General Fund

Parentheses ( ) indicate expenditure decreases.
*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Responses Received From
Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Senate Bill 291

Senate Bill 291 appropriates $350 thousand from the general fund to CYFD to support a program that supports domestic violence victims and their animals.

The effective date of this bill is July 1, 2024.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of $350 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY24 shall revert to the general fund. CYFD currently funds a program providing these services. For FY23, that funding is $75 thousand.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

CYFD provided the following:

> The Behavioral Health Services Division of CYFD currently funds the New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence to subcontract with the Animal Protection New

Mexico (APNM) to run the Companion Animal Rescue Effort (CARE). For over a decade, CARE has provided direct assistance to survivors of domestic violence and their companion animals through a network of veterinary care and boarding facilities. The CARE Project has supported hundreds of victims to ensure the safety of their companion animals at the same time they seek safety for themselves and their children.

Cruelty to animals is a well-documented tactic used by perpetrators of domestic violence to instill fear and maintain relationship control. Some studies show that up to sixty-five percent (65 percent) of domestic violence victims delay leaving violent relationships due to concern for their animals' welfare.

Initiatives like Red Rover Safe Housing Grants (nationally) have recognized the need for provider-based companion animal care and housing, to keep survivors with their companion animals together in safe shelter. Only four (4) domestic violence providers (20 percent of shelters) in New Mexico have built some level of infrastructure (e.g., kennels, policy, insurance, administration) to house survivors' companion animals.

APNM has expressed an interest to the CYFD BHS Domestic Violence Unit to shift focus from individual survivor/companion animal advocacy to building the capacity of domestic violence providers to house and assist companion animals directly (e.g., develop policies and facilities to directly house companion animals). They announced that they would seek a legislative appropriation to be made available to provide significant training and technical assistance to develop a statewide capacity-building plan and support the staff to work with domestic violence services providers around the state. This appropriation would support these efforts, although the monies will be allocated according to competitive procurement in accordance with the procurement code. The language of the bill indicates that the monies are expected to be award to a single provider.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

CYFD said they have performance measures related to this bill which would be positively affected. Implementing safe housing for companion animals throughout New Mexico's domestic violence shelters would remove a significant barrier that survivors encounter when managing the safety of themselves, their children, and their animals. This would likely increase the utilization of services, and improve current CYFD performance measures for domestic violence programs.

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