

## AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2026 REGULAR SESSION

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**SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

*{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}*

Date Prepared: January 19, 2026 Check all that apply:  
 Bill Number: HB 66 Original  Correction   
 Amendment  Substitute

Sponsor :	Rep. Chandler	Agency Name and Code Number:	University of New Mexico-952
Short Title:	Health Care Professional Loan Fund Changes	Person Writing	Kelly O'Donnell
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**SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT****APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		
	(\$25,000)	Non	SGF
	\$25,000		Health Professional Loan Repayment Fund

**REVENUE (dollars in thousands)**

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27	FY28		

(Parenthesis ( ) indicate revenue decreases)

**ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)**

	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total						

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:  
Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

### **SECTION III: NARRATIVE**

#### **BILL SUMMARY**

##### Synopsis:

House Bill 66 updates and clarifies statutory provisions governing the Health Professional Loan Repayment Act. The bill establishes a Health Professions Advisory Committee to review applications and select recipients, revises eligibility and award criteria, and provides a general fund appropriation to support expanded loan repayment awards. The bill also concludes the issuance of new loans under the Allied Health Student Loan for Service Act after May 20, 2026.

HB 66 clarifies and codifies current practice. The definition of “health professional” is refined to enumerate specific licensing statutes, including physicians, nurses, counselors, psychologists, dentists, pharmacists, therapists, emergency medical services professionals, and other licensed health fields. Award recipients must currently practice in New Mexico or agree to relocate and commence practice in the state within ninety days of receiving an award.

The bill establishes fixed award formulas, including up to \$75,000 per year for four years for licensed physicians and scaled awards for other health professionals based on training requirements, subject to caps and prorations. Minimum service obligations are set at four years for physicians and three years for other professionals.

At least fifty percent of available funds at the beginning of each fiscal year must be encumbered for licensed physician awards, with unexpended encumbrances carried forward for physician awards in subsequent fiscal years.

#### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

HB 66 appropriates \$25 million from the general fund to the Health Professional Loan Repayment Fund for expenditure in fiscal year 2027 and subsequent fiscal years. The fund is nonreverting. The scale of the appropriation represents a significant expansion of the program.

#### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

Physician assistants and podiatrists are regulated under the Physician Assistant Act (NMSA 1978, §§ 61-6-1 et seq.) and the Podiatry Act (NMSA 1978, §§ 61-8-1 et seq.), respectively; neither practice act is included in HB 66’s enumerated definition of “health professional,” resulting in exclusion of both professions from loan repayment eligibility under the bill as drafted.

HB 66 appears to expand the list of eligible professions through explicit reference to Professional Psychologist Act; Counseling and Therapy Practice Act; EMS Act, and the Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Act, amongst others.

HB 66 imposes a statutory, front-loaded physician encumbrance requirement and a carryforward rule that limits reallocation of unused funds. HB 66 reduces the flexibility provided under current law by reserving at least half of available funds for physician awards at the start of each fiscal year

and restricting the use of unexpended encumbrances to physicians in subsequent years.

New Mexico is experiencing an acute clinician shortage, particularly in rural areas. Loan repayment is an important component of healthcare recruitment and retention.

## **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

## **CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

## **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

## **ALTERNATIVES**

## **WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL**

## **AMENDMENTS**

Add reference to the Physician Assistant Act (NMSA 1978, §§ 61-6-1 et seq.) and the Podiatry Act (NMSA 1978, §§ 61-8-1 et seq.).