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**AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS
2026 REGULAR SESSION**

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, EMAIL ANALYSIS TO:

LFC@NMLEGIS.GOV

and

DFA@STATE.NM.US

{Include the bill no. in the email subject line, e.g., HB2, and only attach one bill analysis and related documentation per email message}

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

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

Click all that apply:

Original **Amendment**
Correction **Substitute**

Date Prepared: 2026-02-03
Bill No: HB280

Sponsor: Parajon, Cristina
YOUTH INTERNSHIP
Short Title: PILOT PROJECT

Agency Name and Code NMHED
Number: _____
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SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		
N/A	\$250.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue	Recurring	Fund Affected

FY26	FY27	FY28	or Nonrecurring	
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

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

(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

House Bill 280 (HB280) creates the Youth Internship Pilot Project (YIPP) as a three-year pilot program to demonstrate that paid internships for youth will support workforce development in New Mexico. The bill defines "youth" as persons aged fourteen (14) to twenty-two (22) who are attending or recently graduated from high school, and "internship program" as a program administered by a nonprofit organization, school district, charter school, or federally recognized American Indian nation, tribe, or pueblo. The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) will administer the project by awarding grants to eligible internship programs, monitoring grant use, and collecting outcome data. Grant awards have one-year terms and may be renewed if successful and if funds are available, and they may only be used to supplement intern pay, provide support services, and cover approved administrative expenses.

HB280 appropriates two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) from the General Fund to NMDWS for expenditure in FY27 through FY29, with any unexpended balance at the end of FY29 reverting to the General Fund.

The New Mexico Higher Education Department's (NMHED) analysis of this bill focuses on the higher education implications of the proposed legislation. Additional insight may be obtained from other agencies' analyses.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

HB280 appropriates two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) from the General Fund to NMDWS for expenditure in FY27 through FY29 to carry out the youth internship project.

The appropriation does not flow through NMHED, and HB280 does not provide funding to NMHED or to public colleges and universities.

Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY29 shall revert to the General Fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

HB280 targets youth aged fourteen (14) to twenty-two (22) who are attending or recently graduated from high school, which includes high school students and recent graduates who may be enrolled in postsecondary education or considering postsecondary enrollment. Paid internship opportunities can complement higher education pathways by providing career exploration, skill development, and connections to employment for students who are concurrently enrolled in community colleges or four-year institutions, although HB280 does not explicitly reference postsecondary students or coordinate with NMHED.

The definition of “internship program” does not explicitly include public higher education institutions (HEIs), although such institutions could potentially qualify as nonprofit organizations under the bill's eligibility criteria. Many HEIs already administer paid internship programs for students. If those HEIs are not intended to be eligible administrators under HB280, then it may help to clarify that in the bill.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

HB280 includes comprehensive performance and data collection requirements for NMDWS and grant recipients, including internship completion rates, post-internship placement statistics, intern pay, intern demographics, satisfaction surveys, and annual reports to the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) and the appropriate interim committee on economic development.

Annual reports are due to LESL and the appropriate interim committee by December 1 of 2026, 2027, and 2028. A final report on the effectiveness of the project is due to the Governor and the Legislature by December 1, 2029.

There are no direct performance implications for NMHED or HEIs.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

NMDWS will administer YIPP, including determining grant application procedures, awarding grants, requiring intern registration in the department's online system, adopting evaluation metrics, monitoring grant use, and producing annual and final reports. HB280 does not assign new duties to NMHED, and any NMHED administrative impact is expected to be minimal.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

HB280 is related to other 2026 workforce development legislation but does not appear to directly conflict with or duplicate those measures.

2026 House Bill 7 and 2026 Senate Bill 77 focus on apprenticeship funding and public works training requirements.

2026 House Bill 205 addresses professional development for career technical education instructors at K-12 schools and community colleges.

YIPP operates in a different part of the workforce development continuum than these bills, though all share the broader goal of strengthening New Mexico's workforce pathways.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

HB280 does not explicitly include public HEIs in the definition of "internship program," which is limited to nonprofit organizations, school districts, charter schools, and American Indian nations, tribes, and pueblos. This omission may be a technical issue if the Legislature intended for HEIs to be eligible grant recipients, or it may reflect a policy choice to focus the pilot project on pre-college and K-12-affiliated programs.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Because YIPP targets individuals aged fourteen (14) to twenty-two (22) who are attending or recently graduated from high school, participants may be simultaneously enrolled in postsecondary education, particularly at community colleges. HB280 does not address whether internships supported by the project can count toward postsecondary credit, credentials, or work-based learning requirements at HEIs, which could be an opportunity to strengthen alignment between workforce development and higher education completion goals. NMHED may wish to monitor YIPP's implementation and outcomes to assess whether similar grant programs targeting postsecondary students could support higher education workforce pipelines.

ALTERNATIVES

N/A

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

If HB280 is not enacted, the YIPP would not be created, and two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) would not be appropriated from the General Fund to NMDWS to support paid internships for youth through grant awards to eligible organizations. Nonprofit organizations, school districts, charter schools, and American Indian nations, tribes, and pueblos would not receive state grant funding specifically designated for supplementing intern pay and support services under this pilot project, and the state would not collect data or evaluate the effectiveness of paid internships as a workforce development strategy for youth.

AMENDMENTS

N/A