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AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS
2026 REGULAR SESSION

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{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: 2026-01-21
Bill No: SB11

Sponsor: Lopez, Linda M.
NURSE LOAN
Short Title: REPAYMENT ACT

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	\$5,000.0	Recurring	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

Senate Bill (SB11) creates a new section of the NMSA 1978 to create the Nursing Loan Repayment Act for a person licensed as a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse pursuant to the nursing practice act.

The New Mexico Higher Education Department (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

SB11 appropriates five million dollars (\$5,000,000) from the General Fund to the Health Professional Loan Repayment Fund for expenditure in FY27 and subsequent fiscal years.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

SB11 establishes a program structurally similar to the existing Health Professional Loan Repayment Program (HPLRP) administered by NMHED (21-22D NMSA 1978). Under the current HPLRP, nursing professionals are eligible and supported. NMHED awarded 174 nursing professionals in FY25 and 128 in FY26. Of those 128 awarded in FY26, NMHED received 514 applications. The average debt among those nurses awarded in FY26 was fifty-seven thousand (\$57,000). In FY26, NMHED distributed a little over five million dollars (\$5,000,000) to awarded nursing professionals to include nurse practitioners. Over the past three years, NMHED has awarded a total of 679 nursing professions under HPLRP.

Additionally, NMHED administers the Nurse Educator Fund 21-1-27-7 NMSA 1978 which makes awards to students to attain bachelor of science, master of science, doctor of nursing practice and doctor

of philosophy degrees (Ph.D.) in nursing programs by nursing educators employed by a public postsecondary educational institution. NMHED supported five (5) Nurse Educators working at two of New Mexico's four-year universities.

SB11 will create a new Nurse Loan Repayment Program for those nurses working in designated underserved areas in New Mexico, be a U.S. Citizen or lawful permanent residents, and be a New Mexico resident or intend to become one. Eligible applicants must be:

- Licensed Registered Nurses (RNs) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) in New Mexico; or
- Nursing faculty and clinical preceptors at New Mexico postsecondary institutions.

Awards shall be awarded to nurses with significant education-related debt up to thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) per contract. The annual award shall not exceed seven thousand, five hundred dollars (\$7,500) for the first two years of service and ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for each of the second two years, for a total of a four-year contract term. Flexibility for a transition from full-time to part-time employment, however, shall extend the recipients contract for a period necessary to make up for the time period less than full-time employment.

SB11 creates a new nurse section committee composed of the Secretary of Health Care Authority, the Secretary of Health, the Dean of the University of New Mexico College of Nursing and the Chair of the Board of Nursing.

Penalty provisions for a recipient who does not comply with the terms of the contract, NMHED shall assess a penalty of fifteen percent (15%) interest.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

SB11 does not outline specific performance measures; however, if funded, NMHED should develop performance measures.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

SB11 directs the NMHED to promulgate rules to carry out the provisions of the Nursing Loan Repayment Act. The administrative code would clarify details such as the structure of the selection communities to review applicants and underserved areas.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

If SB11 fails to pass while HB66 or SB14 are enacted, the combined effect would be the complete elimination of nursing loan repayment. This outcome would remove a key incentive for individuals entering or remaining in the nursing workforce in New Mexico.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

N/A

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

N/A

ALTERNATIVES

N/A

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

If SB11 fails to pass while HB66 or SB14 are enacted, the combined effect would be the complete elimination of nursing loan repayment. This outcome would remove a key incentive for individuals entering or remaining in the nursing workforce in New Mexico.

AMENDMENTS

N/A