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**AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS
2026 REGULAR SESSION**

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, EMAIL ANALYSIS TO:

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and

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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: 2026-02-04
Bill No: SB244

Sponsor: Maestas, Antonio
UNM STUDENT
Short Title: ATHLETES FUNDING

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	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

Senate Bill 244 (SB244) appropriates five million dollars (\$5,000,000) from the General Fund to the Board of Regents of the University of New Mexico (UNM) for expenditure in Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) to support student athletes, including travel, nutrition, and overall student athlete needs. Any unexpended balance remaining at the end of FY27 shall revert to the General Fund.

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

SB244 appropriates five million dollars (\$5,000,000) from the General Fund to the UNM Board of Regents for expenditure in FY27. This is a nonrecurring appropriation with a reversion clause specifying that any unexpended or unencumbered balance at the end of FY27 shall revert to the General Fund.

The appropriation is a direct legislative appropriation to UNM, and the university did not submit this request to the NMHED for possible incorporation into the NMHED higher education comprehensive funding recommendation. The NMHED has a formal process for reviewing earmarked budget requests for higher education institutions when developing the NMHED funding recommendation.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

SB244 supports student athletes at the UNM by providing funding for travel, nutrition, and overall student athlete needs. Student athlete support services can enhance recruitment, retention, competitive performance, academic success, health and wellness, and compliance with National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), and conference standards. The bill provides broad categories of allowable expenses (travel, nutrition, overall student athlete needs) but does not specify allocation priorities, the number of sports or student athletes to be served, or performance expectations, which affords the UNM flexibility in addressing institutional priorities but may create variability in how funds are utilized. The five-million-dollar (\$5,000,000) appropriation is limited to one fiscal year (FY27) with reversion, and the bill does not address whether ongoing student athlete support costs would be sustained beyond FY27 through institutional budgets or future state appropriations.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

SB244 does not outline specific performance measures or reporting requirements for UNM or NMHED. If funded, the UNM could develop performance measures in coordination with the NMHED, such as student athlete participation rates, retention and graduation rates, nutritional services utilization, travel cost efficiencies, or compliance with NCAA and conference requirements, to support accountability and assessment of the investment in student athlete services.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

UNM would administer this appropriation, including determining allocation priorities among travel, nutrition, and other student athlete needs; coordinating with the UNM Athletics Department; ensuring compliance with NCAA rules and institutional policies; and managing expenditures.

NMHED's role would be limited to general oversight of institutional appropriations, which can be managed within existing resources and administrative systems. The bill does not assign new statutory duties to NMHED or provide additional administrative appropriations to NMHED.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

SB244 is a single-institution appropriation for student athlete support at UNM. SB244 is related to other 2026 legislation addressing UNM athletics funding, including SB124, which creates a major capital projects fund at Division I institutions. However, SB244 addresses operating expenses for student athlete support (travel, nutrition, general needs) while SB124 addresses capital facility improvements. Thus, the bills are companion components of broader athletics investment rather than duplicative.

NMHED's review does not identify direct conflicts.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

SB244 is a single-section appropriation bill with a clear appropriation amount, recipient institution, fiscal year (FY27), and reversion clause. The bill lists broad categories of allowable expenses (travel, nutrition, and overall student athlete needs) but does not specify allocation amounts, priorities, or the scope of "overall student athlete needs," which may include equipment, academic support, sports medicine, mental health services, compliance expenses, or other support functions. The lack of specification provides UNM discretion in project planning and resource allocation but may result in different interpretations of legislative intent regarding spending priorities.

From NMHED's perspective, there are no drafting errors or statutory inconsistencies that would prevent implementation of the appropriation. Bill language that specifies allocation amounts, priorities, or examples of allowable expenses within "overall student athlete needs" would provide greater clarity regarding the Legislature's intent and could facilitate institutional planning and reporting.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Because SB244 is a nonrecurring appropriation limited to FY27 with reversion, the bill does not address whether ongoing student athlete support costs for travel, nutrition, and related services would be sustained beyond FY27 through UNM's institutional budget, other revenue sources, or future state appropriations. NCAA Division I athletics programs have complex compliance, competitive, and student welfare requirements that generate recurring operational costs, and one-time state funding may address immediate needs but may not provide long-term budget stability for student athlete support services.

ALTERNATIVES

UNM may seek other sources of funding, such as athletics revenue (ticket sales, media rights, sponsorships), private donations, conference distributions, or federal grants, to supplement the state appropriation or to sustain student athlete support services beyond FY27.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

If SB244 is not enacted, five million dollars (\$5,000,000) will not be appropriated from the General Fund to the UNM Board of Regents to support student athletes, including travel, nutrition, and overall student athlete needs. The UNM Athletics Department may have fewer dedicated resources to address student athlete support costs and may need to rely on existing institutional budgets, athletics revenue, or alternative funding sources to meet student athlete travel, nutrition, and related needs.

AMENDMENTS

N/A