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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR: Picraux DATE TYPED: 01/24/01 HB 44
 SHORT TITLE: Educational Television Stations Appropriations SB _____
 ANALYST: Gilbert

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY01	FY02	FY01	FY02		
	\$ 2,300.0			Recurring	GF

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in The General Appropriation Act _____

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files
 Commission for Higher Education (CHE)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 44 appropriates \$2.3 million from the general fund to the Educational Television Equipment Replacement Fund to provide digital equipment at the state's three public television stations: KNME-TV (Albuquerque), KENW-TV (Portales) and KRWG-TV (Las Cruces).

Significant Issues

New Mexico's three public television stations comprise a statewide television system providing free over-the-air programs of public interest at all levels of education for the people of New Mexico. Enhanced digital television equipment will allow the local origination of multiple channel broadcasting and broadcast data services that more fully utilize the potential of public television digital programming.

This request was not presented for CHE review as part of the 2001-2002 capital projects funding process for public post-secondary education. Thus the CHE has not included this in the current funding recommendations.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The \$2.3 million appropriation contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY02 shall not revert to the general fund, but instead will remain in the Educational Television Equipment Fund for future purchases.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

UNM submitted a \$2.3 million request to the CHE to initiate KNME-TV's assigned digital Channel 25. This project was not included in the CHE's funding recommendations for FY 01-02. UNM reports that the Federal Communications Commission mandated that all public television stations indicate their intentions to use their assigned digital frequency by May 2000 or the frequency would be reassigned to other non-commercial educational entities. They also note that regardless of the decision to accept and build on the assigned digital frequency, KNME-TV must discontinue its analog broadcast on Channel 5 by spring of 2006.

LG/ar:pr