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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Chasey ORIGINAL DATE 1/21/06
LAST UPDATED _____ HB 17
SHORT TITLE Incarcerated Gender-Specific Programs SB _____
ANALYST Lewis

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
	50.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women (NMCSW)

Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD)

New Mexico Corrections Department (NMCD)

SUMMARY

FOR THE COURTS, CORRECTIONS AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 17 appropriates \$50,000 from the general fund to the Commission on the Status of Women for the purpose of developing best practices and curriculum and training for gender-specific programs for personnel serving incarcerated girls and women.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$50,000 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2007 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women (NMCSW), this appropriation will allow for training based on best practices that recognize the gender-specific needs of clients. Such training will reduce the risk of recidivism by taking into account the specific needs, concerns and barriers impacting women/girls as they return to society.

The New Mexico Corrections Department (NMCD) adds that recent studies have demonstrated a need to implement gender-specific programs that distinguish between male and female inmates. NMCD recognizes this need and has requested assistance from the National Institute of Corrections in formulating gender-specific policies and programs for female inmates.

NMCD notes that the appropriation in this bill will further assist the department in implementing best practices with regard to gender-specific programs serving female inmates, and suggests that the department and its contractor, Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), should be allowed to assist in formulating these best practices.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

With this appropriation, the NMCSW plans to:

- research, outline, and codify “best practices” deemed effective in developing and implementing a curriculum that addresses gender-specific programs for personnel serving incarcerated women and girls;
- develop and “test” the curriculum so that it may be offered to those who will be working with this population; and
- prepare a “Train the Trainers in Gender-Specific Programs for Women and Girls.”

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

NMCSW will appoint a qualified individual to research best practices, determine and write the curriculum, test the curriculum with a relevant population, and adjust the curriculum accordingly. NMCSW plans to coordinate its efforts with New Mexico Corrections Department (NMCD) and Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) personnel/trainers.

CYFD points out that while the appropriation provides for development of curriculum and training, it does not address any funding that may be needed to provide the actual training. However, the appropriation appears intended more to amend existing training programs than to add a new layer of training. Moreover, if the appropriation is in fact recurring, the continuing funding may well be adequate to cover any additional training requirement in future fiscal years.

Similarly, the NMCD suggests that the bill might result in a minor fiscal impact to NMCD to the degree that the department is required to participate in the development and implementation of best practices. NMCD and CCA, which operates the women’s prison, will be required to assign personnel to assist in the development and implementation of these best practices.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

According to NMCSW, failure to enact this bill would perpetuate a one-size-fits-all training, curriculum and, ultimately, treatment of incarcerated women and girls by not taking into account the specific needs, concerns and barriers impacting women/girls as they reintegrate/transition from correctional facilities to society. Training based on best practices that recognize the gender-specific needs of clients, reduces the risk of perpetuating the “revolving door” from incarceration to release to recidivism.