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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 01/24/06
 SPONSOR Garcia, M. J. LAST UPDATED 02/11/06 HB _____
 SHORT TITLE Dental Hygiene Programs SB 83
 ANALYST Williams

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
	\$1,530.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates HB 172

Relates to new initiative of \$400.0 thousand in LFC budget recommendation for dental hygiene

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)
 Department of Health (DOH)
 Health Policy Commission (HPC)
 New Mexico Dental Association

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Endorsed by the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee.

Senate Bill 83 appropriates \$1.53 million from the general fund for start up funding for dental hygiene programs in the following amounts:

- \$525.0 thousand to the board of regents of New Mexico State University for Dona Ana branch community college;
- \$525.0 thousand to the board of regents of Eastern New Mexico University for the Roswell branch campus;
- \$350.0 thousand for Luna Community College; and
- \$130.0 thousand to the Higher Education Department for a new interactive distance education program for dental hygiene and dental assistance degree programs.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$1.53 million contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2009 shall revert to the general fund.

HED notes additional recurring funding will be needed for infrastructure, accreditation and administration. HPC notes “two year dental hygiene programs are extremely expensive to set up and run.”

HED notes possibility of \$250,000 in federal funds for an interactive dental distance education program.

In its budget request to the HED, ENMU requested a new program for dental hygiene collaborative with UNM at \$126.5 thousand and 2 FTE for a cohort of six students. NMSU had a new program request for \$200.0 thousand and a request to expand an existing program at an increment of \$5.6 thousand. No other public, post-secondary institutions submitted requests for expansions or for new initiatives.

The New Mexico Dental Association notes “funding is for a three year period, after which the programs will be fully accredited and state FTE funding through the state (higher education) funding formula will support the program (similar to the program at San Juan College) so additional general fund appropriations will not be necessary.”

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

With respect to funding for HED to develop and implement an interactive distance education program, HED notes “it is not in the mandate of HED to develop and implement specific degree programs.”

New Mexico Dental Association notes “It is anticipated this money would be passed on to the New Mexico Association of Community Colleges to develop the distance education program for dental hygienists throughout the State similar to programs in other states. The infrastructure is already in place throughout New Mexico.”

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

The bill does not specifically place an emphasis on linking the initiative to the state’s strategic plans for health, economic development or higher education and does not address performance accountability components, such as outcomes-oriented performance measures.

HED includes the suggestion of a performance measure related to program graduates finding employment in New Mexico. DOH notes approximately 25% of New Mexico adults age 65 or older have lost all their natural teeth, compared to the national target recommended by *Healthy People 2010* to have no more than 20 percent of this group having lost their natural teeth.

New Mexico Dental Association notes “DOH has indicated these bills are consistent with the DOH strategic plan Program area 9, strategic direction: Objective 3: “increase the health workforce supply in collaboration with other entities in New Mexico”.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

HED notes “it is unclear why (start-up funds for a ... program at Luna Community College) would be routed through HED.”

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

HED notes in New Mexico, nearly 1/3 of the 1,074 licensed dentists have out-of-state addresses or are over age 65. Further, New Mexico ranks 49th among states in the number of dentists per 1,000 people. HED notes the potential for “over saturation of the market” in rural areas.

HPC estimates New Mexico needs 228 new hygienists per year to meet the national guidelines of 1 hygienist to 2000 population. Also, New Mexico counties designated as oral health professional shortage areas: 30 of 33 counties.

HPC notes most of the hygienist positions in southern and southeastern New Mexico are being taken by graduates of El Paso Community College and Amarillo Community College because the pay is higher in New Mexico due to the shortage. These hygienists are not typically anesthesia certified, so they cannot be fully utilized in New Mexico.

Existing dental hygienist programs are:

- University of New Mexico, which accepts 24 students per year, and
- San Juan Community College, which accepts 12 students per year.

Existing dental assistance programs are at:

- Eastern New Mexico University, Roswell
- University of New Mexico, Gallup
- Albuquerque TVI (received preliminary provisional approval)
- Santa Fe Community College (received preliminary provisional approval)

New Mexico statute required a licensed dental hygienist practice under the supervision of a licensed dentist. New Mexico Dental Association notes “Under the Collaborative Practice Act, dental hygienists can have an independent office anywhere in the State as long as they have a dentist sponsor.”

ALTERNATIVES

Laws of 1993, Chapter 389 (Senate Bill 370) established the higher education program development enhancement fund to address critical state issues, including work force and professional training, instructional program enhancements and development of mission-specific instructional programs. This program development enhancement fund is intended to provide a planning and prioritization framework as well as start-up funding for type of initiative.

Higher education institutions receive indirect cost revenues from federal contracts and grants. Further, this money is unrestricted in the sense that the governing board of the institution has the flexibility to choose which projects are supported with these funds. One of the purposes of retaining these funds is to provide seed money and matching funds for projects such as those proposed in this bill.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

1. How many dental hygienists would enter the New Mexico labor market per year as a result of this funding proposal?
2. What performance accountability would be required?
3. Why are the appropriations to ENMU, Roswell and NMSU significantly larger than requested through the HED research and public service project request process?

AW/nt