

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current FIRs (in HTML & Adobe PDF formats) are available on the NM Legislative Website (legis.state.nm.us). Adobe PDF versions include all attachments, whereas HTML versions may not. Previously issued FIRs and attachments may be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/7/06

SPONSOR Sanchez, M. LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE UNM Utton Transboundary Resources Center SB 156

ANALYST Lewis

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

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

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to HB 351 (UNM Utton Transboundary Center Ombudsman)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 156 appropriates \$400,000 from the general fund to the Board of Regents of the University of New Mexico for programs at the Utton Transboundary Resources Center at the University of New Mexico School of Law.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$400,000 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.

According to the Higher Education Department (HED), The Utton Transboundary Resources Center (UTRC) is a special project that appears as a line item in the UNM budget. This program is in addition to any Instruction and General (I&G) budget appropriations that the university receives.

As of 2/7/06, the SFC substitute for SB 415 includes \$100,000 for programs at the Utton Transboundary Resources Center.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to the center's web site at <http://uttoncenter.unm.edu/>, the Utton Transboundary Resources Center carries on in the tradition of Professor Albert E. Utton to use preventive diplomacy and multidisciplinary research to resolve transboundary resource issues. Professor Utton, a native New Mexican and Rhodes scholar, established an international reputation by using multidisciplinary scholarship to address complex resource issues, focusing primarily on the Rio Bravo/Rio Grande and the Mexican-U.S. border. The Center is housed in the UNM School of Law and works closely with the UNM Water Resources Program as well as with scholars and practitioners from across the United States and Mexico.

HED reports that, according to UNM, the Utton Transboundary Resources Center (UTRC) brings together experts from law, science, and public policy to resolve interjurisdictional natural resources issues, with an emphasis on water resources along the U.S./Mexico border. The center acts as a neutral partner in helping stakeholders gather and use data for sustainable resource management plans, including assisting Sandia National Laboratories on a water-planning model for the Middle Rio Grande Water Assembly. Since its inception in 1986, the center has promoted preventive diplomacy to find solutions for both national and international resource issues. Students participate as research assistants and project organizers on all of these activities.

HED notes that for FY06 the UTRC has a total budget of \$218,500 which includes two non-recurring General Fund appropriations of \$180,500 and \$38,000. Overall, the budget is being used to fund a water rights ombudsman and support general programs of the center. HED adds that this particular request was not in the list of priority projects submitted by UNM to HED. Consequently, this request was not reviewed nor recommended by HED for inclusion in FY07.

ML/yr