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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2-10-2006
 LAST UPDATED 2-10-2006 **HB** _____

SPONSOR Campos

SHORT TITLE Luna Community College Math & Science Program **SB** 559

ANALYST Dearing

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
	\$250.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED)

New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 559 appropriates \$250,000 from the general fund to the Governing Board of Luna Community College in fiscal year 2007 for the purpose of expansion of the mathematics, science & technology program, to improve alignment and articulation among local school districts and the community college.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$250,000 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.

This request was not on the list of priority projects submitted by LCC to the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) for review and was not included in NMHED's funding recommendation for FY07.

NMHED is committed to the adequate and equitable support of necessary instructional, student services, and academic support initiatives for all students in New Mexico. Activities to be funded

in this proposal are currently recommended for funding through the Instruction and General (I&G) higher education funding formula within the General Appropriation Act. Funding of this program without consideration of similar needs at all institutions could weaken the equitability and thus the integrity of the established I&G formula funding process.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The appropriation sought after within this bill will allow Luna Community College the ability to create and strengthen outreach programs with schools including Wagon Mound Public Schools, Spring Municipal Schools, Maxwell Municipal Schools, Mora Independent Schools, Las Vegas City Public Schools, West Las Vegas Public Schools and Santa Rosa Consolidated Schools. The goals of this outreach program are intended to align curriculum, such that the lower level schools' material prepares students for a smooth transition into higher education. In general, programs of this nature promote increased teaching of core competencies in math and science to facilitate ease of transition.

LCC is a public post-secondary institution committed to serving the changing needs of its student population and the surrounding communities. Its mission is to provide comprehensive education, preparation for relevant employment, and opportunities for life-long learning. The guiding principles of LCC are to: Prepare students for employment in entry-level positions through a broad range of vocational, technical, and professional education programs; enhance job effectiveness and continue training in keeping up with changes in the job market and technology; assist students in gaining equitable accessibility to education opportunities; provide continuing education and community service to northeastern New Mexico; and offer certificates and Associates of Arts and Applied Sciences degrees.

LCC offers an Associate of Applied Science degree in Electronic Engineering, Drafting Technology, and Manufacturing Technology and awards certificates in Drafting and Electronics. Electronics Engineering Technology is designed to provide students with technical knowledge and skills necessary for employment in the field of electronics and its related occupations. Drafting Technology and Manufacturing Technology degrees provide students with technical knowledge and skills necessary for employment in the field of drafting, manufacturing, and related fields upon transfer to a four-year university.

The LCC Mathematics, Science, and Technology Department will use the appropriations from this bill to upgrade equipment and labs for the Manufacturing Technology and Robotics courses. Currently, there are 46 students who have declared majors participating in these programs. LCC has an articulation agreement with Pecos High School and would like to establish articulation agreements with West Las Vegas and Robertson High Schools. The articulation with Pecos High School allows high school students to take classes at LCC once a week and use LCC's technology and robotics lab/equipment. Although New Mexico Highlands is located in same community, many LCC graduates do not transfer to NMHU due to course transfer issues. LCC graduates are immersed in Algebra-based math courses and NMHU courses are calculus-based. LCC wishes to work with NMHU in developing an articulation agreement so that more LCC graduates can transfer to NMHU.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

The New Mexico Post-Secondary Educational Planning Act authorizes NMHED to identify cases where "establishment of new programs and program expansion are needed in order to meet the present and projected needs for post-secondary education on a statewide basis in an effective and efficient manner." A requirement that educational sites receive approval for new programs or program expansion from the NMHED prior to their operation is established through a pattern of statutory requirements.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

LCC will offer and administer the programs requested in this proposal. Under NMHED procedures for requests for program expansion LCC will be asked to provide a statement of need for program expansion including: projected enrollment, cost associated with program expansion, and existing program accomplishments.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The promotion of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education programs within secondary institutions within New Mexico have recently been high-lighted as issues that are at the forefront of both the New Mexico Federal Congressional Delegation's as well as the federal Executive's funding and legislative initiatives. This initiative is an effort to promote New Mexico's development of a technically proficient state population that is able to compete in attracting investment at both the national and global level in high-tech manufacturing, engineering and research.

There is an established correlation among STEM education programs and incrementally higher rates of high-wage employment.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

The Mathematics, Science, and Technology Program at LCC will have to seek other funding sources to support the expansion of the program.

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