

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill Number:** HB 199

**50th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2012**

**Tracking Number:** .188775.1

**Short Title:** UNM Nurse-Midwifery Program

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives Eleanor Chávez and Danice Picraux and Others

**Analyst:** James Ball

**Date:** February 1, 2012

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**Bill Summary:**

HB 199 makes an appropriation for the nurse-midwifery program in the College of Nursing at the University of New Mexico (UNM).

**Fiscal Impact:**

\$640,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Board of Regents at UNM for expenditure in FY 13. Unexpended or unencumbered funds revert to the General Fund.

**Substantive Issues:**

The Department of Health (DOH) states in its analysis of HB 199 that retaining the nurse-midwife work force requires an investment in education through accredited programs that have a proven record of performance. The cost of educating a nurse-midwife is one-quarter to one-third that of educating a physician. Nurse-midwives also experience much less litigation than their physician colleagues. The economic consequences of a decrease in the number of nurse-midwives could require the training of more highly paid birth attendants, such as physicians, to specialize in obstetrics in order to maintain minimum standards for safe obstetrical care delivery services. HB 199 would support this valuable resource statewide.

**Background:**

According to DOH, nurse-midwives attended one-third of all normal births in New Mexico last year and provided pre-natal care to approximately one-half of the pregnant women in the state. Licensed independent practitioners, nurse-midwives have been an important factor in protecting against the dramatic increase in unnecessary caesarean births.

The Board of Nursing (BON) notes that nurse-midwifery programs are not regulated by BON; however, candidates for the nurse-midwifery program are required to be licensed registered nurses or to hold a license to practice as a registered nurse from a compact state.

**Related Bills:**

SB 227 *ENMU Nursing Program*