



This bill contains an emergency clause.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

There is no appropriation attached to this bill to cover staffing and travel.

CYFD estimates they will need a total of \$30,000 to support the task force in FY12 and FY13.

### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

This bill was introduced on behalf of the Legislative Education Study Committee.

The task force is required to consider the academic research on prevention and efforts in other states; data concerning child sexual abuse in New Mexico; and current efforts and policies of state agencies, school districts, other local government agencies and community-based programs for the prevention, detection, reporting, prosecution and treatment of child sexual abuse. In addition, the task force is required to receive reports and testimony from state and local agencies, public schools, community-based and other public and private organizations involved in child sexual abuse.

The task force shall focus on specific statutory changes and changes to state, local and public school policies that increase and improve prevention and reporting of child sexual abuse and methods to improve cooperation between and among state agencies, district attorneys, public schools and community-based organizations involved in preventing, detecting, reporting, prosecuting and treating child sexual abuse. The task force is responsible for developing a model curriculum for students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade; training for school personnel on child sexual abuse, including strategies for providing emotional and educational support for sexually abused children; educational information for parents and guardians to be included in school handbooks on the warning signs of child sexual abuse, and referral and resource information; a statewide master list of available counseling and resources for children affected by sexual abuse by community and school district; and methods for increasing teacher, student and parent awareness of issues involving child sexual abuse.

CYFD and PED note that the task force's efforts do not appear to address sexual abuse in non-school aged children and do not include the medical community.

PED states that the creation of a child sexual abuse prevention task force for the purpose of making recommendations on methods, practices and policies to reduce child sexual abuse in New Mexico may address health needs of children and may positively impact the resiliency factors of youth which could potentially assist in closing the achievement gap. Having a safe learning environment may ensure that students are ready for success.

### **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

CYFD has performance measures related to the prevention of repeat abuse of foster and adoptive children.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

CYFD will absorb the additional administrative requirements through existing resources.

PED notes that this bill provides for the development of a statewide policy, a training curriculum for the PED and training for school personnel which will require substantial staff time to support the taskforce.

### **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

Child abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse, is a significant problem in New Mexico that requires a multi-faceted and coordinated approach to effectively prevent, address, detect, report, investigate, prosecute and treat. CYFD's 2010 Protective Services Fact Book documented the following information about abuse and neglect for the 2010 calendar year in New Mexico:

- In 2010, there were 31,592 reports of child abuse and neglect in New Mexico and 56.3% (17,791) of those reports were accepted and investigated by CYFD Protective Services.
- There were 16,794 completed CYFD investigations and 22.5% (3,779) of those were substantiated for child abuse and/or neglect as defined by New Mexico Children's Code.
- Among all of the CYFD investigations, there were multiple children and allegations that resulted in a total of 46,479 allegations of abuse and/or neglect and 20.5% (9,537) of those allegations were substantiated.
- There were 1,267 allegations of child sexual abuse and 16.7% (211) of these allegations were substantiated for abuse.

### **POSSIBLE QUESTIONS**

Is it the intention of the sponsor that the secretaries of CYFD and PED will not be permitted to send designees?

DW/lj