

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 59

52nd Legislature, 1st Session, 2015

Tracking Number: .198352.1

Short Title: ENMU Statewide Robot Workshops

Sponsor(s): Representatives James E. Smith, Don Tripp, Jr., and Alonzo Baldonado

Analyst: James Ball

Date: January 28, 2015

Bill Summary:

HB 59 makes an appropriation to manage and conduct statewide workshops for students in grades 3 through 12, together with their teachers, to learn how to design, build, program, and test payload-delivering, firefighting, or other autonomous robots, culminating in an annual international robot competition.

Fiscal Impact:

\$300,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Board of Regents of Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU) for expenditure in FY 16. Unexpended or unencumbered funds revert to the General Fund.

Fiscal Issues:

For FY 15, ENMU received a General Fund appropriation of \$99,700 for a youth robotics competition to:

- provide workshops to prepare teachers and students to build, program, and test robots for use at an international robotics competition;
- cover event facility rentals, support, and materials; and
- administer a robot education and competition program.

For FY 16, the Legislative Finance Committee does not recommend funding for the activity.

Substantive Issues:

According to the Public Education Department, a study by Brandies University comparing students engaged in contextual learning programs, such as robotics, to a group of students with comparable backgrounds and achievements in high school math and science reports that students engaged in contextual learning programs are:

- significantly more likely to attend college;
- twice as likely to major in science and engineering;
- ten times more likely to have had an apprenticeship, internship, or co-op, in their college freshman year; and
- more than twice as likely to expect to have a career in science or technology after college.

Background:

According to the RoboRAVE website, the competition is scheduled for April 30, 2015 through May 2, 2015 at the Albuquerque Convention Center. Participation is open to any child, from anywhere, who is eight years of age or older and on a team of two to four players.

A team is any group of two, three, or four players, with the oldest person determining the team division, as follows:

- Elementary School (grades 3-5);
- Middle School (grades 6-8);
- High School (grades 9-12); and
- Big KIDS (anyone beyond high school).

Costs for groups fielding teams are as follows:

- 1 to 3 teams: \$100 per team;
- 4 to 6 teams: \$90 per team;
- 7 to 9 teams: \$80 per team;
- 10 to 14 teams: \$70 per team; and
- 15 or more teams: \$60 per team.

The 2015 Robot Challenges include such activities as jousting, triathlon, and firefighting.

Committee Referrals:

HEC/HAFC

Related Bills:

SM 9, RoboRave International, In Recognition