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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR McMillan **ORIGINAL DATE** 1/30/2015
LAST UPDATED 3/12/2015 **HB** 121/aSEC
SHORT TITLE Use of Nurse Educators Fund **SB** _____
ANALYST Hartzler

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY15	FY16		
	N/A		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicate of SB 341

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SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Health (DOH)

Higher Education Department (HED)

University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center (UNMHSC)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Senate Education Committee Amendment

The Senate Education Committee Amendment to House Bill 121 makes individuals studying for their doctorate of nursing practice also eligible to receive financial aid from the nurse educators fund.

Synopsis of Bill

HB 121 proposes to amend Section 21-1-27.7 NMSA 1978 to expand the pool of individuals eligible to receive financial aid from the nurse educators fund to pursue advanced nursing degrees to teach at public colleges and universities.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no fiscal impact as a result of HB 121. In FY14 HED spent nearly \$145 thousand in general fund appropriations on the Nurse Loan-for-Service program. The Legislature increased support for this program in FY15, with a general fund appropriation of nearly \$850 thousand.

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For FY16, both the LFC and Executive recommendations maintained the FY15 general fund level.

While HB 121 would not have a fiscal impact on the fund, making more nurses eligible for awards from the fund would likely increase demand and result in unmet financial need.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

DOH reports that “New Mexico’s nursing shortage is worse than the national average, with about one third of the state’s nurses at or above the retirement age. HB 121 is aligned with policies proposed by the Legislature and Governor in recent years that are aimed at increasing the supply of qualified nurses in New Mexico.” Further, the bill supports DOH’s 2016 strategic plan, result 4: recruitment and retention of health professionals to respond for health care shortages.

HED notes that the purpose of HB 121 is to allow registered nurses seeking to be nursing educators at public higher education institutions access funds to get advanced nursing degrees. The bill expands the current pool of eligible nurses, consisting of nurse educators currently working at the state’s public institutions. Expanding the pool of eligible students should lead to more nurse educators and more nurses seeking graduate degrees.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no performance measures associated with this bill. Should HB 121 be enacted, HED may consider reporting the number of nurses seeking loans-for-service aid who are both currently working at public institutions and those who come from other providers and institutions. In addition, the department may consider tracking individuals who applied for financial assistance but were not awarded due to lack of funds or other reasons.

DUPLICATION

HB 121, as amended, is a duplicate of SB 341.

TH/bb/je/aml/je