

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current and previously issued FIRs are available on the NM Legislative Website (www.nmlegis.gov) and may also be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR SCONC ORIGINAL DATE 2/7/19
LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Senior Center Food Gardens SB 84/SCONCS

ANALYST Chilton

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY19	FY20	FY21	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total		NFI	NFI	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From the following with regard to the original bill:

Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSO)

Department of Health (DOH)

Department of Environment (NMED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

The purpose of Senate Conservation Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 84 is to encourage the growing of food crops at senior centers, with ALTSO permitting any senior center to develop programs for producing edible fruits and vegetables by senior citizens and senior center staff, and to use the harvested crops from these efforts in food service at these institutions or to be given to senior participants.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

No identified fiscal implications

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

DOH comments on the importance of fruits and vegetables in the diets of all people, including the elderly:

Fruits and vegetables contain essential vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other compounds that may help prevent many chronic diseases. Compared with people who consume a diet

with only small amounts of fruits and vegetables, those who eat more generous amounts as part of a healthful diet are likely to have reduced risk of chronic diseases, including stroke and other cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers (www.choosemyplate.gov/vegetables-nutrients-health). To promote health and prevent chronic diseases, the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend 2 cups of fruit and 2.5 cups of vegetables per day for a standard 2,000 calorie diet, with recommendations based on an individual's age, gender, and activity level (<https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/>). However, in 2017, only 14.8% of adults over 50 in New Mexico ate 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily (https://ibis.health.state.nm.us/query/selection/brfss/_BRFSSSelection.html).

Older adults are also less likely to meet Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations of at least 30 minutes of daily physical activity and are at increased risk for developing chronic diseases associated with aging. Gardening is one way to meet CDC's physical activity recommendations (www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/12/081229104702.htm). Gardens also create opportunities for older volunteers to contribute their time and expertise to grow nutritious foods, socialize with one another, and pass on cross-generational knowledge to younger community members (www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-10/documents/elder_accessible_gardening.pdf).

In New Mexico, some senior centers have expressed interest in establishing edible gardens but are reluctant to move forward without rules that address good agricultural practices and food safety. The provisions in SB84 could ameliorate these concerns by providing guidance and clarity to senior centers interested in pursuing edible gardens and consequently promote access to fruits, vegetables, and physical activity opportunities to this population.

AMENDMENTS

As it is possible that people less than 50 years of age may avail themselves of services rendered in a senior center, it would be reasonable to allow them to take part in the activities related to food production, safe handling, cooking and preservation.

LAC/gb/al