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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/25/22

SPONSOR Stefanics LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program SB 57

ANALYST Klundt

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY22	FY23		
	\$1,100.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Health (DOH)

Aging and Long Term Services Department (ALTSD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 57 (SB57) appropriates \$1.1 million from the general fund to the Department of Health (DOH) to match with federal funds for an expansion of the senior farmers' market nutrition program to provide vouchers for purchasing New Mexico-grown fruit and vegetables to additional

eligible, low-income seniors; provided that not more than \$500 thousand shall be used for associated program administration.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$1.1 million contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY23 shall revert to the general fund.

DOH reported the state is required to provide a 30 percent match of the total administrative costs for the Farmers Market which is already included in the FY22 operating budget. This bill would not provide additional federal revenue for this program related to this appropriation.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

In FY22 DOH received \$352 thousand in federal revenue for this program.

DOH reported, “The New Mexico WIC and Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition programs (FMNP and SFMNP) were the first in the nation to introduce a Proof of Concept-A Modern Technology for mobile and shopper card payments. This project has gained national attention within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services community and other state WIC and Farmers’ Market programs. This project initiative is being closely monitored by the White House. In 2016, New Mexico ranked 14th among all states for percentage of the population aged 65 or over, and this statistic is expected to increase (New Mexico Department of Health, 2018). In addition to currently serving 17,607 for FFY 2021, this bill will provide additional access to healthy foods for an approximately 22,500 additional participants (customers) in FY23, and boost profits for small farmers and local economies (stakeholders) as the additional vouchers are spent at farmers’ markets across the state.”

DOH also provided the following proposed budget for the appropriation contained in this bill:

Description of Cost	Cost
Electronic Solution Technology	\$40,000.00
Part-Time contract temporary seasonal workers to assist seniors & farmers with rollout at 75 markets @ \$25.00 (four hours/5 market days)	\$37,500.00
Travel expenses for training farmers & partners statewide	\$3,000.00
40 Laptops @ \$900.00 each	\$36,000.00
Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program Food Costs	\$900,000.00
Remaining for unexpected costs	\$83,500.00
Total Cost	\$1,100,000.00

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

ALTSD reported, “The older adult and senior population of New Mexico continues to grow. It is anticipated that by 2030 New Mexico will be the 4th highest in the nation for total senior population per capita. In the United States, more than one in 10 adults aged sixty (60) and older are food insecure and lack reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food (National Council on Aging, 2018). In New Mexico, 11.9 percent of adults aged sixty (60) and older are food insecure and are at an increased risk of adverse health outcomes as a result (New Mexico State Aging Plan 2021-2025). Senior hunger impacts older adults in both rural and urban environments. However, research from Feeding America found that people who live in rural areas face higher hunger rates due to the unique challenges associated with living in remote areas, including additional barriers in access, transportation, and proximity to food banks or grocery stores. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the service providers and seniors reported difficulty accessing food in rural areas of the state and food cost, specifically on meat and fresh produce has increased by more than 10 percent. Anticipated results of this legislation would allow eligible seniors to participate in the Farmer’s Market voucher program and give them an opportunity to purchase fresh, locally grown produce. Per the National Council on Aging seniors who participate in public benefit programs experience increase in wellbeing and reductions in food insecurity. Local farmers (who sell at local Farmer’s Markets) will benefit from increased participation at Farmers Markets.

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