

LFC Requester:	Connor Jorgenson
-----------------------	-------------------------

**AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS
2024 REGULAR SESSION**

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO:

AgencyAnalysis.nmlegis.gov

{Analysis must be uploaded as a PDF}

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}

Check all that apply:
Original **Amendment**
Correction **Substitute**

Date 1/17/2024
Bill No: HB 35

Sponsor: Herndon
Short Title: UNM Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Agency Name and Code Number: University of New Mexico-952
Person Writing Lenaya Montoya
Phone: 5052771670 **Email** lenaya.montoya@unm

SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY24	FY25		
	\$1,178.29	Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act
 Relates to HB39

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: House Bill 35 makes an appropriation totaling \$1.178 million dollars from the general fund to the Board of Regents of the University of New Mexico to support the Communities to Careers programs at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center’s Office for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation made to the Communities to Careers programs at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center Office for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. The funds will be used to increase the capacity of Communities to Careers programs to address the critical shortage of diverse health care professionals through projects that will enhance the health career pathway programs delivered to rural and underserved communities through the Communities to Careers regional hubs. Funds from this appropriation will provide for operational costs, student employee time for programmatic efforts, increased student stipends, development of additional curriculum, supplementation of our K-8 programs, and enhancements to program evaluation and communication strategies and processes. These funds will result in additional health career pathway program locations in rural and underserved areas, and increased access to existing health career pathway programs in rural and underserved areas, increased student participation, and improved program outcome tracking.

Some of the Communities to Careers programs listed in HB35 are existing Research and Public Service Projects that receive direct appropriations in the General Appropriations Act. House Bill 35 appropriations will be used to supplement and enhance upon existing efforts. UNM faculty, staff and program directors agree that the financial resources listed appear appropriate for the work requested and are prepared to execute if the bill is passed.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

As one of seven “majority-minority” states and the 5th largest state geographically, NM has a great need for improving the distribution and diversity of the state’s health care workforce. NM consists of 33 counties, 32 of which are designated Health Professional Shortage Areas. This lack of access to health care services across the state and throughout the Native American Nations, Tribes and Pueblos in New Mexico is greatly exacerbated by provider shortages as well as an aging workforce. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the health care delivery system and its workforce with significant effects on underserved learners across our state and tribal communities.

These combined forces have highlighted the desperate need to diversify our health care workforce while ensuring our New Mexico students have opportunities to thrive and learn. Health care practitioner occupations offer the top five highest median annual wages in NM, and employment opportunities in healthcare are projected to grow much faster than average in the next ten years. 57% of high school seniors in NM are interested in a health career. However, systemic barriers are keeping many students, particularly economically and educationally disadvantaged students, out of NM’s healthcare workforce. For example, only 22% of NM’s primary care physicians are Hispanic, compared to over 50% of the state’s population identifying as Hispanic; 2% of these physicians are Native American, despite 11% of the population identifying as Native/Indigenous.

With a successful track record of long-term, established community-based partnerships, and regionally distributed and academically rigorous activities and programs, Communities to Careers (C2C) is well-positioned to support rural and/or underrepresented and underserved students in attaining these promising careers.

Communities to Careers’ mission is to grow “our own” diverse health care workforce. Reaching first generation, bilingual, underserved and underrepresented students from rural and urban underserved communities, and sovereign nations across New Mexico is critical to our mission. The increasing diversity of NM requires a future health workforce that is reflective of the population, knowledgeable, and culturally attuned to care for a growing range of health needs

and to increase healthcare in underserved locations. Fostering a representative, culturally and linguistically attuned health care workforce has been shown to result in improved patient-provider relationships and health outcomes.

C2C serves youth and communities by developing and implementing a replicable series of 12 health career and education pathway programs that are integrated, inter-professional, and high quality, adapted to and offered at 45 sites across NM and Tribal communities. These programs work upstream to provide underrepresented and underserved diverse K-20 learners from across NM and Tribal communities, longitudinal academic and personal enrichment and exploration and attainment of their health professions training and career goals. Programs are offered at no cost to participants while providing stipends and/or scholarships.

C2C strengthens NM's campus and community capacity to improve the health care workforce by building multi-level, multi-partner capacity to meet the growing needs of New Mexico's rural and medically underserved communities and investing in communities through *C2C* Regional Health Careers Pathway Hubs that deliver a series of K-20+ community-based programs, a network of partners representing schools, health care facilities, higher education institutions, mentors, role models, and community-based organizations, and on-site regional coordination. *C2C* Regional Hubs serve the Northwest, Northeast, North, Central, Southeast, and Southwest regions of our state, and neighboring Tribal communities.

With HB 35 funds, the Communities to Careers programs will contribute to the overall improvement of the distribution, diversity, and training of the next generation of culturally and linguistically attuned health care professionals for our state of New Mexico.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

The Communities to Careers programs funded under HB35 will contribute to increasing the diverse health care professionals that are desperately needed in our rural and underserved communities in New Mexico. In particular, it will expand pathways to health careers for K-20+ students in regions around the state through the Communities to Careers Regional Hubs. Funds will be used to supplement and enhance our K-8 programs to rural and underserved areas, improve access to in-person programs through providing transportation and/or residential support, and improve access to virtual programs by providing technology resources thereby increasing the number of students we can serve. In addition, funds will be used to improve evaluation, communication, and curriculum resources that will enhance the programs and student experience. With the HB 35 funds, we will serve approximately 800 K-20+ students, create new health careers curriculum that centers identity development and cultural humility alongside academic excellence and community engagement, and enhance our longitudinal tracking of participants.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

HB 35 funds will be administered by the University of New Mexico Health Science Center Office for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Communities to Careers staff and faculty. UNM Health Science Center Office for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion has been the successful steward of a diversified portfolio of funding to establish and grow the Communities to Careers programs and regional hubs over the past 20 years. This track record includes Research and Public Service Projects, federal grants, and private donations, and ensures that the Communities to Careers staff and faculty are well-prepared to manage the administration of HB 35. The activities of HB 35 will align with and complement existing Communities to Careers efforts to advance program capacity towards the mission of growing New Mexico's diverse health care workforce as we

strive to achieve health equity for our communities.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

HB 35 relates to General Appropriations as the Communities to Careers programs are supported in part by existing Research and Public Service Projects. The funds from HB 35 will not duplicate the current RPSP funds use. Additionally, HB 35 relates to HB 39.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

The implications for not funding HB 35 will be a lack of funding intended to address the critical shortage of health care professionals and the disparities in the diversity of the health care workforce in New Mexico. Not funding HB 35 will result in a reduction in Communities to Careers program locations and diminished capacity to serve students interested in health career pathways.

Lack of investment from the state into these evidence-based, proven programs will mean that there will be an interruption or reduction in service from the Communities to Careers programs to our most vulnerable and under-resourced communities around New Mexico. Without consistent and continued funding, our ability to offer the full range of K-20+ health career pathway programs in our rural and underserved communities will be significantly impacted. Currently, we have many communities and schools requesting that we expand to offer the Communities to Careers programs at their locations. Without this HB 35 support, we will not be able to respond to this demonstrated and documented community need.

Not funding HB 35 will highly jeopardize our loss of invaluable long-standing committed partners; our network of education, healthcare, and economic stakeholders, mentors, and role models, opportunities for youth, and the investment and momentum gained from the foundations developed over these 20+ years of Communities to Careers programs and investment.

Sustainable investment in our youth and communities is essential to maintain the momentum and impact of these Communities to Careers programs and to address the dire health professions shortage and achieve health equity for our communities. New Mexico's students can be a key part of the strategy for addressing our state's health care needs, if we support them early and consistently in their educational pathway with the type of tiered training, mentoring, and resources that Communities to Careers offers.