

**2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION
AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS**

Section I: General

Chamber: Senate **Category:** Bill
Number: 74 **Type:** Introduced

Date (of THIS analysis): January 25, 2024
Sponsor(s): Martin Hickey
Short Title: UNM Department of Health Faculty

Reviewing Agency: Agency 665 – Department of Health
Person Writing Analysis: Arya Lamb
Phone Number: 505-470-4141
e-Mail: Arya.Lamb@doh.nm.gov

Section II: Fiscal Impact

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation Contained		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY 24	FY 25		
\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY 24	FY 25	FY 26		
\$0	\$0	\$0	NA	NA

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Non-recurring	Fund Affected
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	NA	NA

Section III: Relationship to other legislation

Duplicates: None

Conflicts with: None

Companion to: None

Relates to: None

Duplicates/Relates to an Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act: None

Section IV: Narrative

1. BILL SUMMARY

a) Synopsis

Senate Bill 74 (SB 74) would appropriate twenty-two million eight hundred thousand dollars (\$22,800,000) from the general fund to the board of regents of the university of New Mexico for expenditure in fiscal years 2025 through 2028 for development and faculty hiring for the school of public health. No more than five million seven hundred thousand dollars (\$5,700,000) shall be spent in any one fiscal year.

Is this an amendment or substitution? Yes No

Is there an emergency clause? Yes No

b) Significant Issues

Public health is the science of protecting and improving the health of people and their communities. This work is achieved by promoting healthy lifestyles, researching disease and injury prevention, and detecting, preventing, and responding to infectious diseases. Overall, public health is concerned with protecting the health of entire populations. These populations can be as small as a local neighborhood, or as big as an entire country or region of the world. Public health professionals work to prevent problems from happening or recurring through implementing educational programs, recommending policies, administering services, and conducting research—in contrast to clinical professionals like doctors and nurses, who focus primarily on treating individuals after they become sick or injured. Public health also works to limit health disparities. A large part of public health is promoting health care equity, quality, and accessibility. [What is Public Health? | CDC Foundation](#)

Public health improves our quality of life, helps children thrive, reduces human suffering, and saves money. For example, public health is responsible for tracking disease outbreaks and vaccinating communities to avoid the spread of disease; setting safety standards to protect workers; developing school nutrition programs to ensure kids have access to healthy food; advocating for laws to keep people safe, including smoke-free indoor air and seatbelts; working to prevent gun violence; and addressing the impact of climate change on our health. [What is public health? \(apha.org\)](#)

Founded in 2016 as a response to New Mexico's need to address health concerns among the state's various communities, the College of Population Health is the second college of its kind in the U.S., and the first to offer a Bachelor of Science in Population Health degree. Through education, applied research, policy, service, and partnerships, the College of Population Health works to educate a diverse future workforce equipped with

competencies in disease prevention, wellness, social determinants, environmental health, mental health, healthcare delivery and policy; leverage collective expertise in epidemiology, biostatistics, social sciences, community health, health policy, and healthcare delivery to develop interventions that are innovative, high-quality, data-driven, and validated by multiple sources of evidence to improve and sustain social, environmental, and health outcomes; assess community, health system and environmental needs and assets in order to map disease, interventions, and policies that warrant in-depth attention to improve health outcomes; mobilize and expand partnerships within the UNM Network, with Tribal, regional, and global communities, public and private institutions, and government agencies to take actions that advance health and social equity for New Mexico, the U.S.-Mexico border, Tribal Nations, the country, the region and the globe; and grow and sustain a College that is organizationally and financially strong with a climate that values and invests in human beings. [About | UNM College of Population Health](#)

In the public health sector, recovery from the pandemic has been slow. In fact, workforce issues have become even more pronounced in the wake of COVID-19, with public health workers facing fatigue, hostility, and erosion of authority. A January 2022 study of state and local public health staff revealed troubling findings: 56 percent of public health employees “report at least one symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder,” and others are generally struggling with their mental health. Additionally, nearly 1 in 3 public health workers are “considering leaving their organization within the next year,” with 39 percent of those who intend to leave saying the pandemic increased the likelihood of their exit. According to the study, the top two reasons for leaving were “pay” and “work overload/burnout.” [How Investing in Public Health Will Strengthen America’s Health - Center for American Progress](#)

Moderate increases in public health spending have been linked to as much as a 7 percent decrease in mortality rates. Studies have found that even a \$10 per capita increase in local public health spending is associated with reduced overall mortality and a greater share of the population reporting being in “good,” “very good,” or “excellent” health. Likewise, reductions in low birth weight, foodborne illnesses, rates of sexually transmitted diseases, and more have been linked directly to spending on public health interventions. [How Investing in Public Health Will Strengthen America’s Health - Center for American Progress](#)

2. PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

- Does this bill impact the current delivery of NMDOH services or operations?

Yes No

If yes, describe how.

- Is this proposal related to the NMDOH Strategic Plan? Yes No

Goal 1: We expand equitable access to services for all New Mexicans

Goal 2: We ensure safety in New Mexico healthcare environments

Goal 3: We improve health status for all New Mexicans

Goal 4: We support each other by promoting an environment of mutual respect, trust, open communication, and needed resources for staff to serve New Mexicans and to grow and reach their professional goals

3. FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

- If there is an appropriation, is it included in the Executive Budget Request?

Yes No N/A

- If there is an appropriation, is it included in the LFC Budget Request?

Yes No N/A

- Does this bill have a fiscal impact on NMDOH? Yes No

4. ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Will this bill have an administrative impact on NMDOH? Yes No

5. DUPLICATION, CONFLICT, COMPANIONSHIP OR RELATIONSHIP

None

6. TECHNICAL ISSUES

Are there technical issues with the bill? Yes No

Page 1, Line 20 references The University of New Mexico's School of Public Health. It should read 'College of Population Health.'

7. LEGAL/REGULATORY ISSUES (OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES)

- Will administrative rules need to be updated or new rules written? Yes No
- Have there been changes in federal/state/local laws and regulations that make this legislation necessary (or unnecessary)? Yes No
- Does this bill conflict with federal grant requirements or associated regulations?
 Yes No
- Are there any legal problems or conflicts with existing laws, regulations, policies, or programs? Yes No

8. DISPARITIES ISSUES

While SB74 will have no direct impact on disparate populations, the appropriation will provide training and additional faculty that will potentially impact students who serve disparate populations, improve social determinants of health, and/or work to reduce racism.

9. HEALTH IMPACT(S)

None

10. ALTERNATIVES

None

11. WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL?

If SB 74 is not enacted, an appropriation of twenty-two million eight hundred thousand dollars (\$22,800,000) from the general fund to the board of regents of the university of New Mexico for expenditure in fiscal years 2025 through 2028 for development and faculty hiring for the school of public health would not be made.

12. AMENDMENTS

None