

**AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS
2024 REGULAR SESSION**

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SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Check all that apply:

Original **Amendment**
Correction **Substitute**

Date Prepared: 2024-01-23
Bill No: SB164

Sponsor(s) William P. Soules
:

Agency Name ECECD 611
and Code
Number:

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SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY24	FY25		
NFI	NFI	Recurring	General Fund
NFI	NFI		

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY24	FY25	FY26		
NFI	NFI	NFI		
NFI	NFI	NFI		

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATION BUDGET (dollars in thousands)

	FY24	FY25	FY26	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	NFI	NFI	NFI			

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act:

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Senate Bill 164 (SB164) requires the Department of Health (DOH) to create a pilot program to evaluate the impact of providing a universal basic income from pregnancy through the first year of an infant's life on pregnant people in New Mexico. The bill appropriates \$80 million from the general fund to the DOH for expenditure in fiscal years 2025 and 2026 for this purpose. The program consists of a control group of participants and a test group of participants.

Participants would be required to be pregnant at the time of application and have an income at or below one hundred fifty percent (150%) of the federal poverty level. The program would provide \$1,500.00 per month to pregnant people. In exchange, participants would be required to receive home visitation, complete surveys, and attend prenatal care appointments. If a participant fails to comply with the requirements, they would be placed in the control group for the remainder of the program.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

None

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

As one way to address high national maternal mortality rates, guaranteed income pilot programs for expectant mothers have been started recently in several states, including Colorado and New York. Colorado's Healthy Beginnings Project provided twenty (20) pregnant participants with a guaranteed income of \$750.00 per month for fifteen (15) months. The Bridge Project in New York City provides \$1,000.00 a month for three (3) years; to be eligible, women must live in the specified region, be at least 18 years old, 23 weeks pregnant or less with their first child, and have an annual household income under \$52,000.00.

There have been some basic income pilot projects in New Mexico, although none that specifically focused on the perinatal period. The New Mexico Economic Relief Working Group (ERWG) implemented the New Mexico Guaranteed Income Pilot Program for Immigrant Families, which was an 18-month guaranteed income (GI) pilot program to address poverty and economic security for low-income, mixed-status families and workers in New Mexico.

New Mexico has one of the highest rates of child poverty in the nation, with 105,030 (24%) of our children living at or below the Federal Poverty Level in 2022. Income supplementation for parents, such as with a child tax credit, has been shown to decrease disparities and improve health equity. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress expanded the federal Child Tax Credit (CTC). Not only did child poverty dramatically decline, but the gaps between the poverty rates for children of color and those for white children also narrowed. New Mexico also increased our state child tax credit in recent years.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

None for ECECD.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

None for ECECD.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

None.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

SB164 states that participants who do not comply with the requirements of home visitation, completing surveys, and attending prenatal care appointments are placed in the control group. This implies that only the test group of participants would receive the \$1,500.00 per month income, but it is not stated explicitly. The bill also does not clarify how the participants would be sorted into the control group and the test group, or what would happen if their income changed during the course of the project. Also, while prenatal care appointments are required, well child checks are not required even though the program continues for the first year of the child's life.

Additionally, the timing of this pilot project as written presents some issues for participant eligibility. SB164 mandates that DOH distribute universal basic income to participants in the amount of \$1,500.00 per month “through the duration of the program.” SB164 specifies that the program “shall begin on July 1, 2024, and shall end on June 30, 2026.” As written, SB164 requires that

participants receive payment for two (2) years. Additionally, participants beginning the program in 2025 or early 2026 may not receive income for the duration of their pregnancy and for the full first year of their child's life.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The bill states that participants would receive home visitation from employees of the DOH or an entity approved by the department. The only home visiting program provided by DOH employees is Family Connects, a brief postpartum screening and connecting program that is only currently available in a limited area of Bernalillo County. However, DOH could collaborate with ECECD to ensure participants were enrolled in home visiting programs in their local community.

ALTERNATIVES

None.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

If SB164 is not enacted, the universal basic income pilot program will not be implemented.

AMENDMENTS

None.