

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

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 200

SHORT TITLE: KANW Educational Radio Station

SPONSOR: Campos

LAST 2/3/26 ORIGINAL
UPDATE: DATE: 2/3/26 ANALYST: Rovang/Liu

APPROPRIATION*
(dollars in thousands)

FY26	FY27	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
	\$500.0	Recurring	Government Results and Opportunity Program Fund

*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Relates to Senate Bill 199

Relates to an appropriation in HAFC Substitute for House Bills 2&3

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency or Agencies Providing Analysis

Public Education Department

Higher Education Department (HED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Senate Bill 200

Senate Bill 200 (SB200) appropriates \$500 thousand from the government results and opportunity (GRO) program fund to the Public Education Department (PED) for expenditure in FY27 for the KANW educational radio station for equipment purchases and to add reporting resources to support coverage of rural New Mexico news. Any unexpended balance at the end of FY27 reverts to the GRO program fund.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns, which is May 20, 2026.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$500 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the GRO

program fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY27 would revert to the GRO program fund. Although the bill does not specify future appropriations, establishing a new grant program could create an expectation that the program will continue in future fiscal years; therefore, this cost is assumed to be recurring. Additionally, the bill does not specify what type of equipment or resources for reporters will be purchased. Equipment that is not a capital expense is considered an operating expense and, thus, recurring.

The HAFC Substitute for House Bills 2&3 does not include an appropriation specifically for KANW; however, the budget includes \$3.2 million to the Department of Finance and Administration and the Indian Affairs Department for public television and radio for expenditure in FY27 through FY28 that could be used for this purpose. Additionally, the budget includes appropriations to three higher education institutions that operate their own radio stations:

Educational Television & Radio Appropriations (2026 Introduced HB2)

Institution	Station	General Fund	Other State Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds
UNM	KNME	\$1,352.5	\$6,358.1	\$1,594.5	\$9,305.1
NMSU	KRWG	\$1,524.6	\$3,400.0		\$4,924.6
ENMU	KENW	\$1,320.3	\$500.0		\$2,670.3

During the 2025 First Special Session, the Legislature appropriated funds to support public television and radio stations to compensate for federal funding losses across the state, including **\$5.6 million** from the general fund to the Department of Finance and Administration and **\$430 thousand** from the general fund to the Indian Affairs Department to support educational television and public radio. The Higher Education Department's (HED) recent statewide review of public broadcasting impacts found that higher education license holders represent the largest share of federal public broadcasting funding losses in New Mexico. These stations provide instructional opportunities for students, workforce training in media and journalism fields, emergency alerting capacity, and local news coverage in rural communities.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

KANW (89.1 FM) is a noncommercial public radio station owned and operated by Albuquerque Public Schools. The station airs music, news, and local public radio programming, including the following shows:

- National Public Radio (NPR) *1A, All Things Considered, Bullseye, Code Switch and Life Kit, Fresh Air, Here & Now, Hidden Brain, It's Been a Minute, Jazz Night in America, Morning Edition, On Point, Planet Money & How I Built This, TED Radio Hour, Throughline, Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me!, and Weekend Edition,*
- British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World Service,
- KANW *Classical Music for a Sunday Morning, Concerning New Mexico, Top 15 at 5:00, Native Music Hours, New Mexico Music, Saturday Night Country Classics, and Today's Hits,*
- *Your Classical Composers Datebook,*
- *Freakonomics Radio,*
- KCRW *Left, Right & Center,*
- *Live Wire,*
- *Marketplace Morning Report and Tech,*
- *On the Media,*
- Public Radio International's *The World,*

- PRX *Milk Street Radio*, *Reveal*, *Snap Judgment*, and *The Moth Radio Hour*,
- *Report from Santa Fe*,
- *Selected Shorts*,
- *Sound Opinions*,
- *The Pulse*,
- The New York Times *The Daily*,
- *The Splendid Table*,
- *Think*,
- *This American Life*,
- *Travel with Rick Steves*,
- Wisconsin Public Radio *To the Best of Our Knowledge*,
- WNYC Studios *Radiolab*, *Science Friday*, and *The New Yorker Radio Hour*, and
- *Vox Today*, *Explained*.

KANW began operations in 1949 at the old Albuquerque High building when APS was granted a license by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to operate an FM station to serve the needs of APS and its students. In 1969, the station increased its transmission power and moved its transmitter to the top of Sandia Crest to serve a wider audience. In 1973, KANW added New Mexico music programming. In 1983, another power increase was approved by FCC, and today it operates at the maximum legal power. KANW became affiliated with Public Radio International in 1995 and a full member of the NPR network in 1999. KANW also operates two other stations: KNLK-FM in Santa Rosa and KIDS-FM in Grants.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

A 2022 University of Pennsylvania study on government investment in public media found democratic countries with independent and well-funded public broadcasting systems had healthier democracies, as measured by *The Economist's* Democracy Index (which ranks countries on their electoral process, functioning of government, political participation, political culture, and civil liberties). Researchers of the study note that government funding of public media can potentially lead to state control over the dissemination of information; however, many democracies around the world have created strong safeguards to maintain media independence while supporting their public media system. They further note the benefits of public media systems include a well-informed political culture, high levels of support for democratic processes, and increased levels of civic engagement. Governments around the world create publicly funded media systems to fill information needs that typically would not be covered by commercial media, including:

- Delivering news to remote, small, or rural regions that would not be profitable,
- Covering topics like public affairs programming and international news that are not typically attractive to advertisers or subscribers, and
- Covering communities that are not usually picked up by mainstream news organizations.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

This bill relates to Senate Bill 199 (SB199), which would expand the allowed uses of the “educational television equipment replacement fund” to equipment for radio stations operated by state institutions of higher education or public schools. If SB199 is enacted, SB200 may not need

to become a recurring cost to the GRO fund and future replacement costs for KANW may be sourced from the educational television equipment replacement fund.

The bill may relate to and may duplicate appropriations in the HAFC Substitute for House Bills 2&3, which include a \$2.75 million appropriation to DFA and \$429.6 thousand appropriation to IAD for public television and radio expenditures in FY27 through FY28.

SR/sl/ct