

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

Current and previously issued FIRs are available on the NM Legislative Website (www.nmlegis.gov) and may also be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/05/14

SPONSOR Woods LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Increase Firefighter Survivor Benefit SB 190

ANALYST Hanika Ortiz

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY14	FY15	FY16	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total		see fiscal impact				

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)

Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 190 amends Section 10-11B-5 NMSA 1978 by increasing the survivorship benefits for firefighters killed in the line of duty from \$50 thousand to \$250 thousand.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The state provides a \$250 thousand survivor benefit when a public safety officer dies in the line of duty. The bill proposes the same amount as a supplemental survivor benefit for firefighters.

The EMNRD notes that volunteer fire department firefighters, who are often the first responders, would also be covered and the increased benefits would apply to them as well.

The Fire Protection Fund (Section 59A-53-7 NMSA 1978) makes distributions to the Firefighters Survivor Fund when the balance drops below \$50 thousand. If the provisions in the bill become law, the Legislature should consider amending the distribution to \$250 thousand.

The cash balance for the Fire Protection Fund was \$32.6 million as of December 2013. The cash balance for the Firefighters Survivors Fund was \$68 thousand as of December 2013.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The bill amends a section in law that provides survivorship benefits to the surviving spouse or children of firefighters killed in the line of duty, or to the surviving parents if there is no surviving spouse or children.

EMNRD reports the department employs firefighters to suppress wildland fires in dangerous conditions. DHSEM reports firefighters are involved in responses coordinated by the department during critical incidents (fire, floods, hazardous materials or winter weather events, etc.).

DUPLICATION

Duplicates HB 287.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Family members of firefighters killed in the line of duty will continue to receive \$50 thousand.

AHO/jl