

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

SPONSOR Burt ORIGINAL DATE 2/14/20
LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____
SHORT TITLE Federal Radiation Exposure Compensation SB SM 51
ANALYST Wan

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY20	FY21	FY22	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	NFI	NFI	NFI			

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Memorial 51 requests that the New Mexico congressional delegation support federal legislation to expand and improve compensation under the federal Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA). From 1945 to 1962, the United States conducted nuclear weapons development and testing that required uranium to be mined and processed in many areas, especially New Mexico, and uranium deposits have been found on or near the Navajo Nation. Thousands of individuals were exposed to radiation as a result of proximity or employment in uranium mining and processing, and exposure has been linked to serious illnesses in exposed individuals.

The memorial goes on to say that in 1990, the U.S. Congress passed RECA but only designated certain areas of Arizona and Utah as official downwind areas for which compensation would be paid, and limited that compensation only to those workers employed before January 1, 1972. In 2019, U.S. Representative Ben R. Lujan introduced, and Representatives Xochitl Torres Small and Debra A. Haaland co-sponsored, HR 3783 and U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich co-sponsored SB 947, both of which would extend compensation to uranium workers who were exposed from 1972 to 1990, expand the list of eligible workers, add New Mexico to the list of downwind areas, make claims eligible for \$150 thousand of compensation, and expand the types of medical conditions that render claimants eligible for compensation.

On January 24, 2017, Senators Udall and Heinrich co-sponsored SB 197, which would amend RECA to improve compensation for uranium mining workers.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

No fiscal impact.

CW/rl