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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR: Tripp DATE TYPED: 02/17/03 HB HJM 7

SHORT TITLE: U.S. Highway 60 Recognition SB _____

ANALYST: Gonzales

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY03	FY04	FY03	FY04		
			Indeterminate	Recurring	Road Fund
			\$10.0	Non-Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Responses Received From

Historic Preservation Division, Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA)
 State Highway and Transportation Department (SHTD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Joint Memorial 7 requests (1) the Office of Cultural Affairs to recognize United States highway 60 as a place of historical importance; and (2) the Historic Preservation Division of the Office of Cultural Affairs to nominate United States highway 60 to the state register of cultural properties and to the national register of historic places.

Significant Issues

This memorial recognizes United States highway 60 as one of the original highways commissioned in 1926 and as a major transcontinental highway that runs from Virginia Beach, Virginia to Los Angeles, California passing through several historic New Mexico towns.

This memorial assumes that the recognition of United States highway 60 as a place of historical significance and a place on the state registry of cultural properties and the national register of historic places will:

- promote tourism in the towns along its route;

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- encourage preservation of the highway and the communities along the highway;
- encourage New Mexicans and tourists to learn about the rich history associated with the highway; and
- encourage other states to preserve the transcontinental highway and its history.

Properties listed on either the State or National Registers are subject to the requirements of the Prehistoric and Historic Sites Preservation Act of 1989 Sections 18-8-1 through 18-8-8, NMSA 1978. Designation to the State Register would require the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department to maintain the historic character of the road and, therefore, potentially place an undue burden on the Department to perform analysis of impact to historic resources for highway improvements and routine maintenance.

The Historic Preservation Division indicated it would need to:

- (1) assess whether US60 has sufficient integrity to warrant consideration for nomination to the State and National registers;
- (2) clarify whether the nomination should focus on simply the road and its associated engineering features (the roadbed, bridge crossings, culverts, and bypassed alignments) or whether a more comprehensive nomination should be prepared that would include an intensive-level survey of associated motels, gas stations, signage and related historic archaeological sites segments of the road.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no appropriation contained in the bill. The scope of the nomination will affect the amount of funding required. A consultant would have to be hired to research, survey, and prepare a nomination for either a road only or more comprehensive nomination that includes associated properties such as motels, gas stations, signage and related historic archaeological sites segments of the road. Funding for research, preparation of the nomination, and coordination with the Cultural Properties Review Committee and the Keeper of the National Register. The Office of Cultural Affairs estimates that an initial survey, assessment and research, and finding would cost \$10.0 with the cost increasing to \$25.0 for completion of a comprehensive nomination.

According to the SHTD, on a project by project basis, the SHTD environmental review process would be more costly since additional time would be needed in order to provide environmental and cultural resource approvals. Historic preservation restrictions could cause delays in project development and force the Department to choose improvements that otherwise would not be warranted. A quick look at the FY 03-08 STIP identifies nine improvement projects to US 60. Any or all of these could be impacted by a listing of US 60 on the State and National Registers.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

There would be minor administrative and staffing implications to the Historic Preservation Division of the Office of Cultural Affairs.

SHTD indicates that once US60 were placed on the State and National Registers, there could be substantial implications on the agency's environmental and project development personnel.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

The memorial requests the OCA to recognize US60 as a place of historical importance and to nominate United States highway 60 to the state register of cultural properties and to the national register of historic places; however, field and archival research is necessary to determine which segments of the road and associated features are eligible for listing on the state and/or national registers. Furthermore, the Cultural Properties Review Committee reviews nominations for listing on the State Register and recommends properties to the National Park Service for the National Register.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

OCA proposes the following alternative:

“Because of the unknown integrity of the highway and the possible management problems for a state register-listed in-use facility, an alternative is to survey and nominate only bypassed or off-system sections of roadway that have retained their integrity. Such segments may exist as county or local roads. A second approach is to research and survey the highway as part of a State and National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form, from which individual buildings associated with US60, rather than the highway, would be nominated to the registers. The individually nominated buildings, such as gas stations, motels, and landmarks, would provide a history of the building and the road that could assist efforts to promote tourism, by providing text that could be used for interpretive signage or walking brochures. A third approach is to designate the highway as an official Byway, with an emphasis on its historical significance. Several states have tried this approach, marking sections of similar historic transcontinental highways, such as the Lincoln Highway, with uniform signage, and developing interpretive pullouts and walking tours at each town along the route. A combination of these efforts would produce favorable results for both historic preservation and tourism.”

JMG/prr